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There are more direct routes to work.

But I hate My job anyway.

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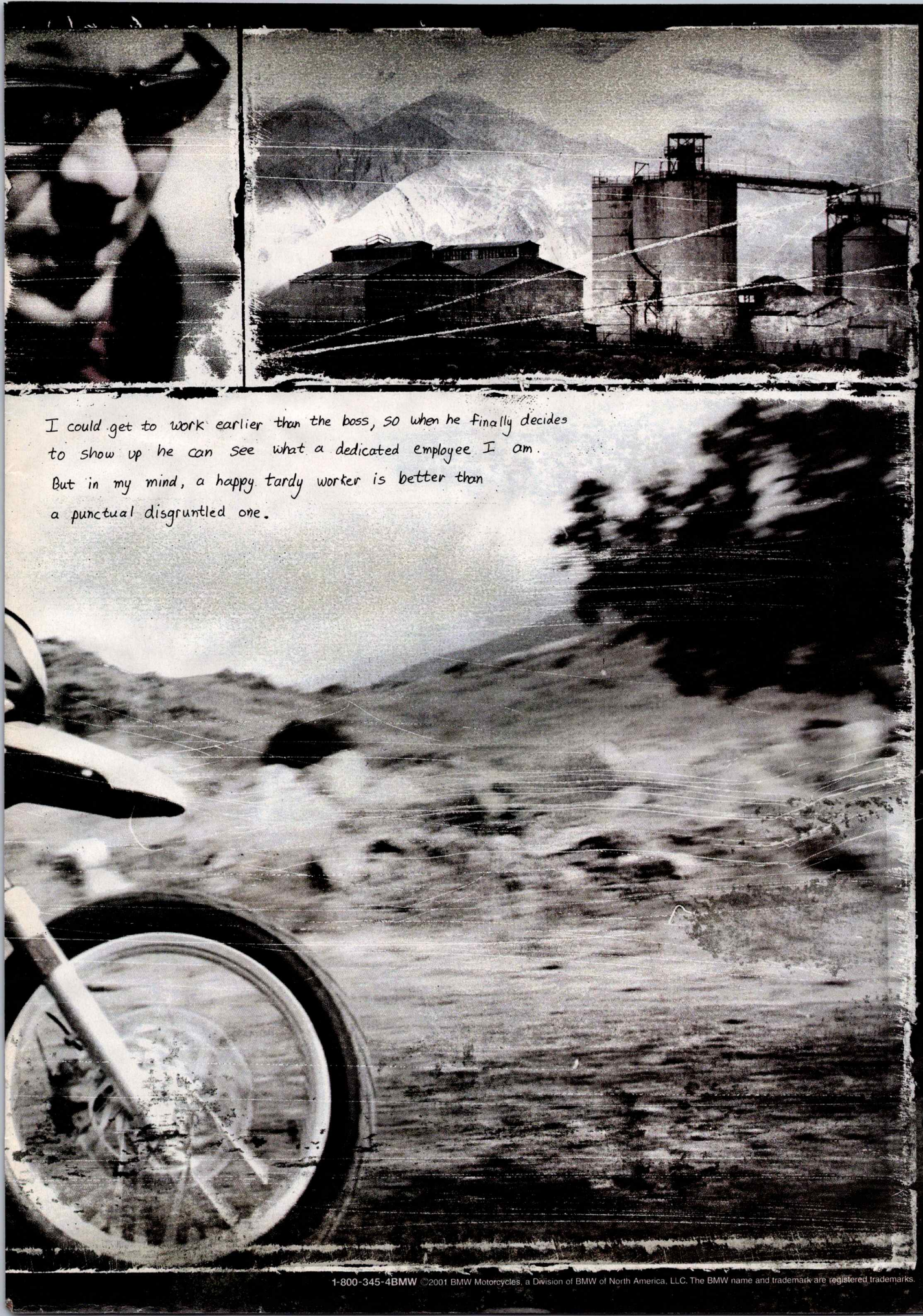
I could get to work earlier than the boss, so when he finally decides to show up he can see what a dedicated employee I am. But in my mind, a happy tardy worker is better than a punctual disgruntled one.

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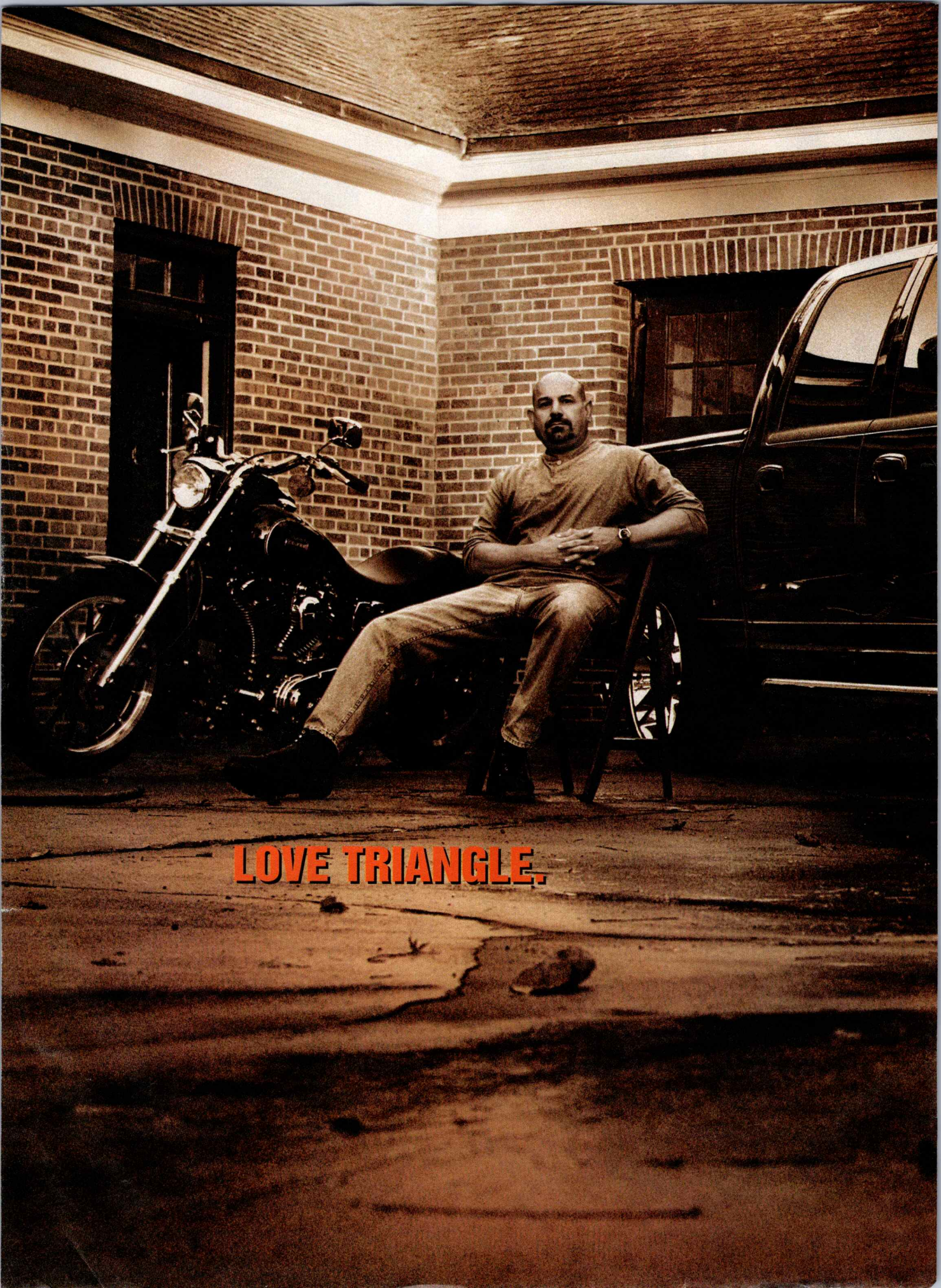
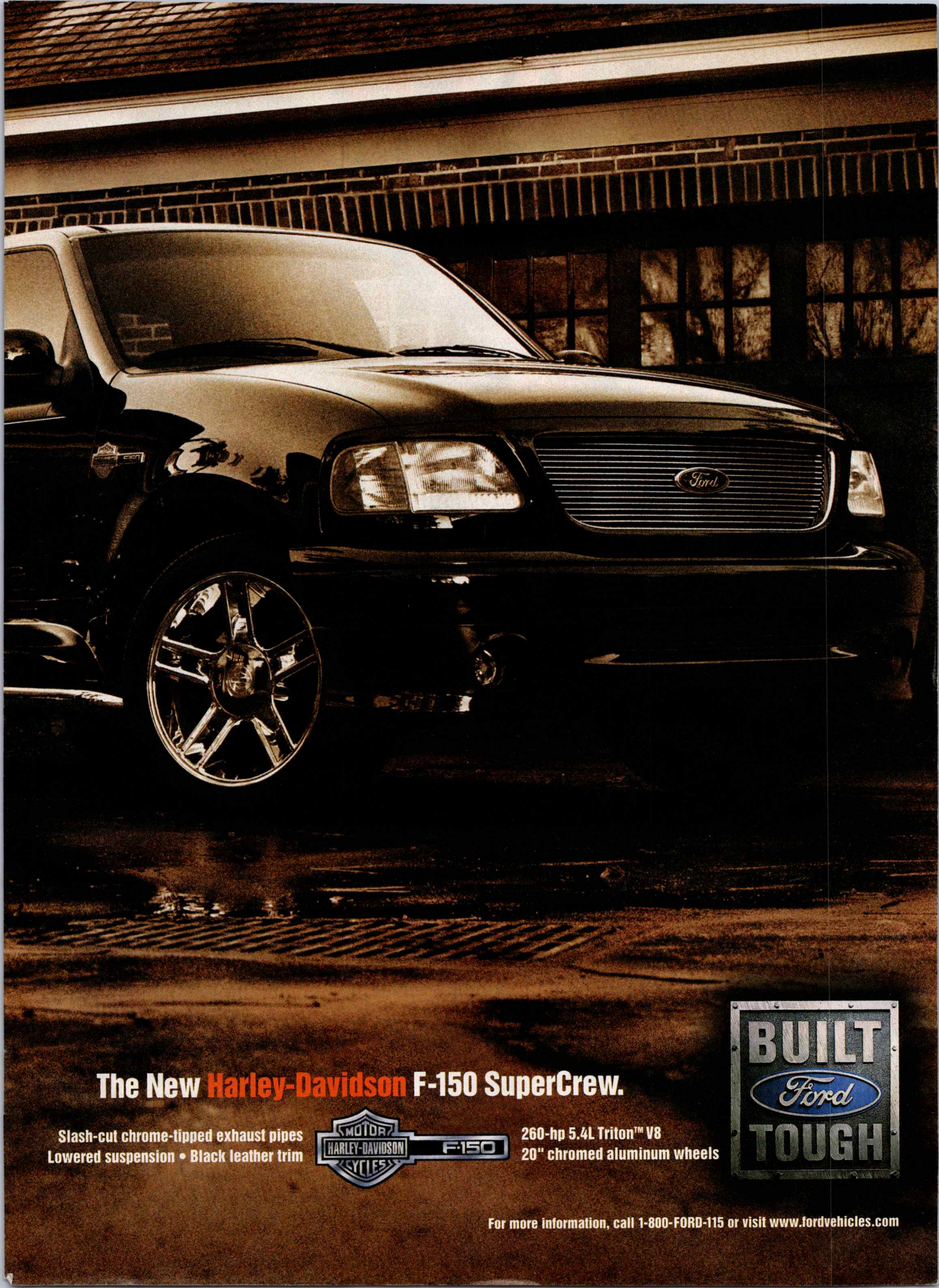

LOVE TRIANGLE.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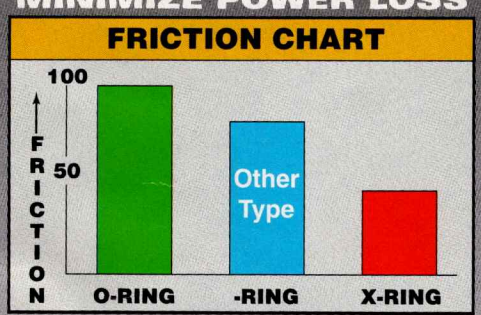

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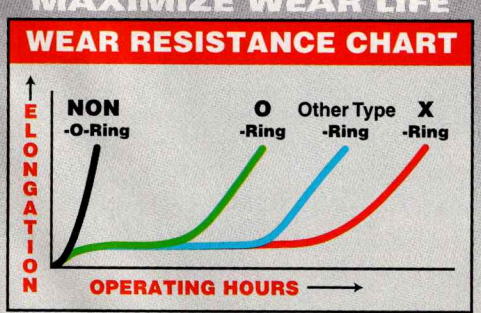

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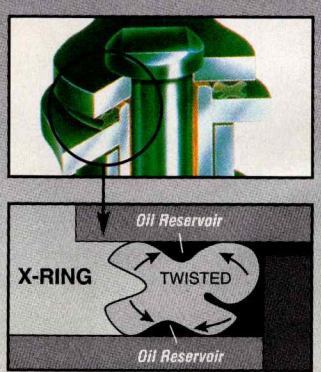

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contents photo: Kevin Wing

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July 2001

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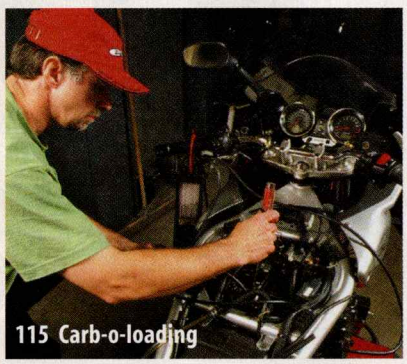

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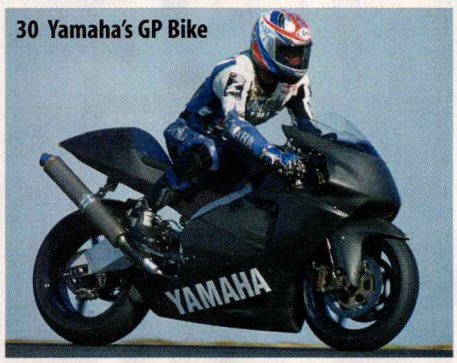

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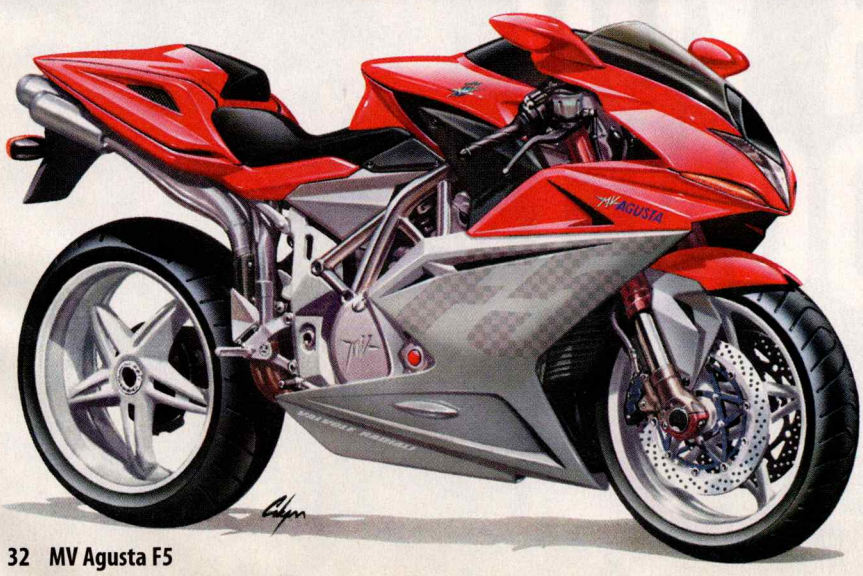

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on the cover

Is Aprilia's new RST1000 Futura a sport-tourer, a multicapable GT, or simply a great sportbike? It might be all three, actually, because it's so good in so many areas. Kevin Wing caught the Futura ripping asphalt beside the azure Pacific.

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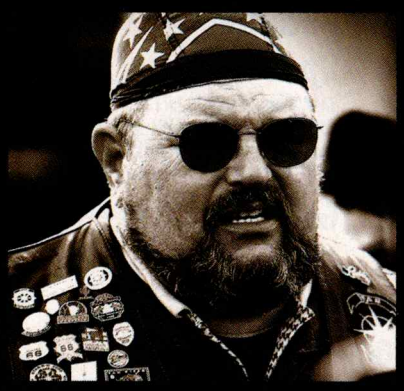

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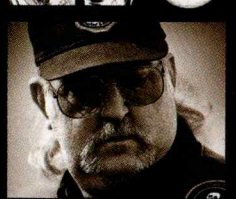

Special thanks to Yamaha owners and STAR members (above, from top left): Charles Snyder, Don Davis, Dennis Cooper, Mary Sparks, Roy James Perkins Jr., Rob Roy Fletcher, & Ralph Aitken. (right): Paul & Cheryl Bell.

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lean angle

On the Move

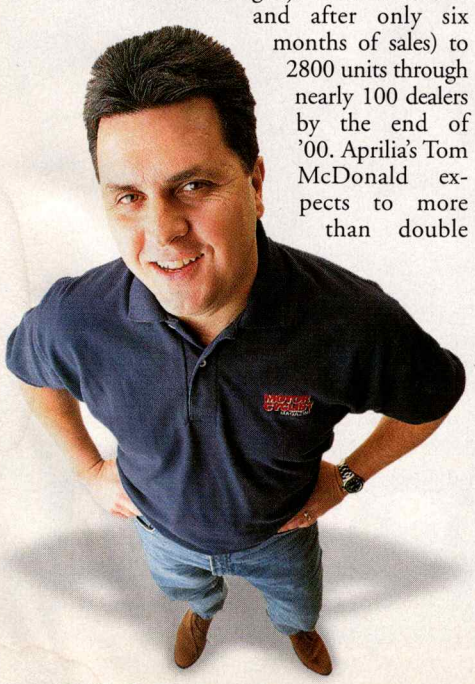
QUICK QUESTION: WHICH BIKE-MAKERS ARE *REALLY* ON the gas these days? The obvious answers are Honda (for its recent reawakening), Suzuki (for its world-beating GSX-Rs) and Yamaha (for its R1/R6 streetbikes and talk-of-the-town four-stroke motocrossers).

I'd add Aprilia to that list. Yep, Aprilia. If you're not clear on the reasons, that's OK. Aprilia isn't exactly a household name in the United States.

At least not yet.

Truth is, there's a *lot* going on at Aprilia right now—much more, in fact, than Troy Corser's stunning double win in the opening round of the 2001 World Superbike Championship. Aprilia has quietly become a major power in the worldwide motorcycle scene, retailing more than 310,000 units in '00, and finishing second in total sales (in Europe) to Piaggio, which produces only scooters. There's also the recent acquisition of legendary Italian marques Laverda and Moto Guzzi—and even rumors of a linkup with Ducati, ostensibly to balance the also-rumored megadeal between Piaggio and MV Agusta.

The company has made bold moves in the United States, also. After setting up its American distributorship in late '98, Aprilia quickly established itself as a player in the States, going from retail sales of 515 units in '99 (through just a few dealers and after only six months of sales) to 2800 units through nearly 100 dealers by the end of '00. Aprilia's Tom McDonald expects to more than double that number during the 2001 selling season, and if successful, Aprilia will have leapfrogged notable manufacturers such as Triumph, all in what's arguably only its second full season of motorcycle sales in the Unites States.



"The keys for us," McDonald told me recently, "are quality dealers, the best available technology, passion and uniqueness—Italian 'style,' if you will. It's a good mix."

The bikes themselves, a trio of open-class V-twin boomers, lend credence to McDonald's words. The Mille and Falco were impressive enough by themselves, but it's the hugely competent Futura we've tested exclusively in this issue (page 36) that really opened my eyes (in more ways than one) to the company's potential. The thing is superb—a superbike in sport-tourer clothing. And no matter what you think of its looks, it's hard to fault it functionally. For Aprilia to produce a machine with the all-around performance and finish quality of, say, Honda's ultra-polished VFR800F Interceptor *in its first year of production* is amazing enough. But to do so and then add a serious dollop of Italian uniqueness/character on top of the package, and sell it for reasonable dough, makes it a helluva deal in my book. Keep an eye on these guys; they're definitely on the move.

Also on the move is Patrick Bodden, who'll write a column titled Déjà View for us each month (see his first effort on page 15). Bodden's 40-plus years of motorcycling experience, combined with his architectural degree and years of racebike-building on the vintage and club-racing scenes, give him a unique perspective from which to view today's two-wheeled goings on. Call him our "motoculture" editor, if you will.

Ride well.

Mitch Boehm, Editor

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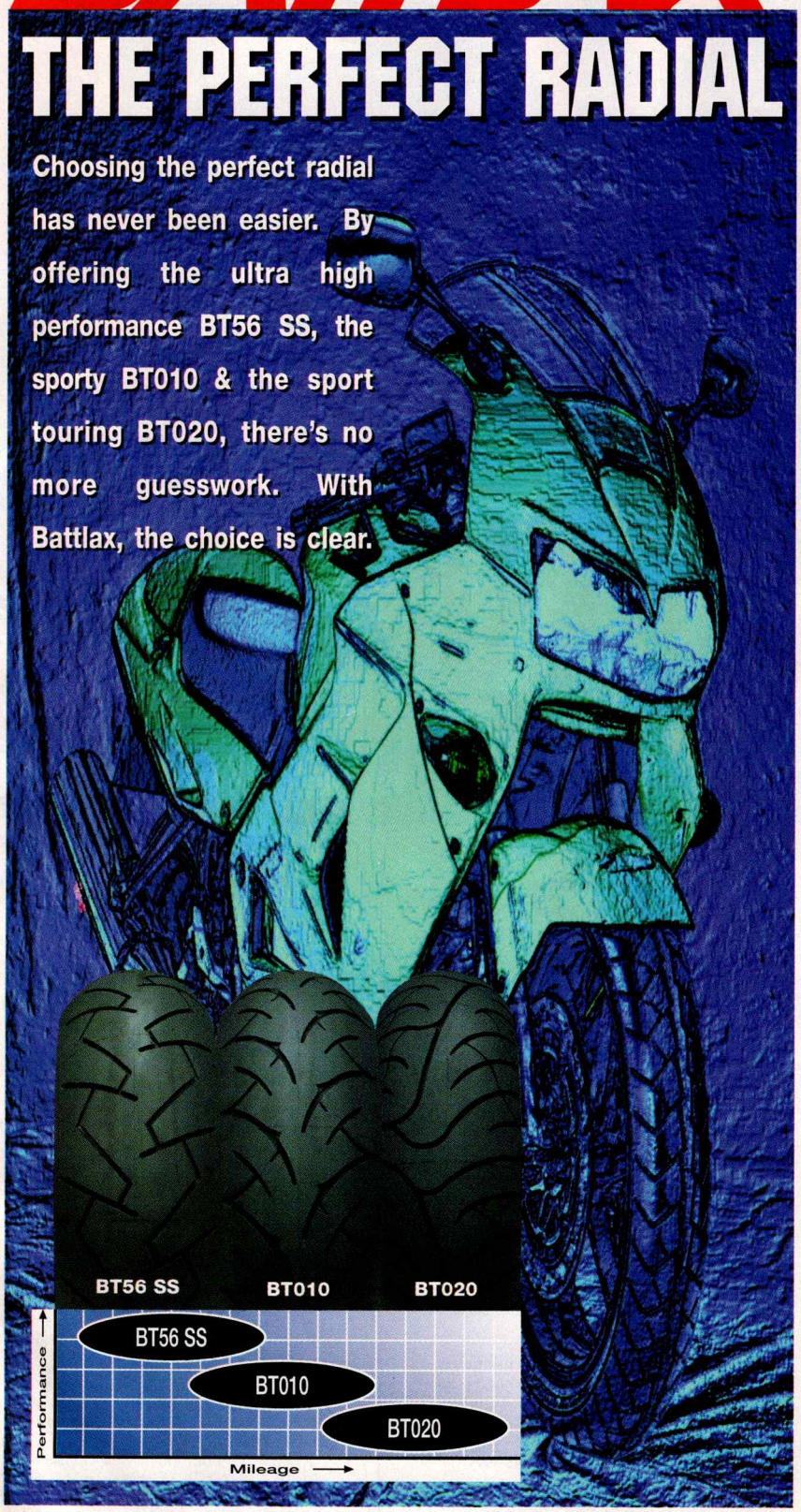

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déjà view

by Patrick Bodden
Contributing Editor

The High Angst of Daytona

A JOKE: THIS GUY, DUNCAN, HAS A JOB WITH THE CIRCUS. His job is to follow the elephants and to scoop...well we don't need to go into the technical details of poor Duncan's big-tent responsibilities. Partly out of concern, partly out of contempt, his friends eventually confront him. "Duncan, why on earth do you do this? It's disgusting and smelly, it's unglamorous and undignified, and the pay is pitiful. Why don't you get a better job?"

Without hesitation, and with unshakable conviction, Duncan replies, "Are you kidding? And give up show business?!"

A real moment during preparations for this year's Daytona vintage races: On one of those all-too-rare occasions when I'm working efficiently and contentedly on our team's Formula 750 racebike, team member, technical consultant and general counselor, R.L. Brooks throws open my shop door and demands an explanation. "Why can't I be happy?!"

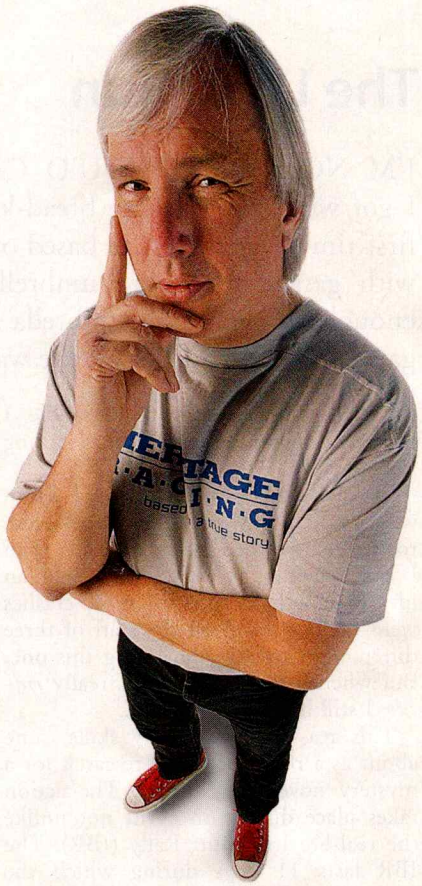
Brooks was grinning as he posed the universal question of modern life or, at least, the riddle of the possible rewards of preparing for a seventh-consecutive racing program at Daytona. But I understood instantly and precisely his angst; I could feel his pain. And I replied, "Because we've been *had*!"

Never again will we be able to calmly travel to Daytona in the spring and admire some particularly splendid racing machine arcing gracefully through the infield and hammering the banking in dramatic fashion, blissfully ignorant of what is involved in producing a mere 20 minutes of such a wonderful performance. No way. We can't just watch the show. No matter how much angst is involved, we have to be part of the show.

Preparing a big, fast four-cylinder Honda racing motorcycle upon which Mr. Boehm might explore Daytona's high banks is certainly more rewarding than following along behind elephants at the circus. (Even if this otherwise dysfunctional collection of eccentric individuals we like to think of as a racing team does, on occasion, resemble a circus act.) But vintage racing at Daytona isn't exactly the big time, either. There's little glamour and little public acclaim, so there's correspondingly little budget with which to field a serious effort. Instead we substitute our time for money—incomprehensible amounts of time that have to be pirated from other more responsible and, quite frankly, more important endeavors in our professional and personal lives. When the time runs out, it's like we're junkies looking for a fix: Anything seems reasonable as a means of continuing toward the next big rush. Three or four all-nighters in succession? Sure, why not? We can sleep in the van on the way to Daytona. Drag your friends and innocent bystanders into the same sordid, surreal world of sleep deprivation, junk food and poor personal hygiene? Even better! After all, misery loves company.

All racebike construction involves dealing with stress-raisers. There are the types that engineers warn us about: poorly designed and crafted parts with abrupt changes in section, sharp edges and corners, and fracture-generating skid marks from hacksaws and grinders. These are rather easily overcome. Understand the forces involved and design accordingly: gradual transitions in shape, gently radiused corners, rounded and smoothed edges. All are pleasing to the eye as well as to the touch and, most importantly, resistant to failure.

But it's the metaphorical stress-raisers that will more than likely bring you to your knees and have you seeking psychological relief more than engineering know-how. These stress-raisers come in a terrific assortment: self-induced panic due to procrastination and poor planning, performance anxiety directed at both yourself and the machine, and the inevitable concerns that your botched efforts might well result in someone getting hurt or suffering the unthinkable, just to name a few. If these traumas aren't enough to make you ponder the value of the entire exercise, your well-intended teammates and the occasional impatient magazine editor-racer



ROBIN REID

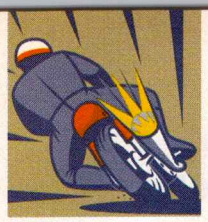
will invariably come up with elaborate schemes to further add to your emotional struggle. *Why did you do it that way? Do you really have to do it right before the next practice? I don't really like those numbers.* It takes a will of iron to filter the noise from the constructive criticism.

Then there's Daytona International Speedway itself. Anyone who sees it for the first time won't be in any way calmed by its hospitable environment, for the simple reason that it's not at all hospitable. The place is mythic, immense, tilted up at a crazy angle and virtually bellows, "Get serious you puny mortal!" The Speedway's notoriously ill-tempered security personnel aren't likely to put you at ease, either.

So, why endure it?

Well, for those with a love for the craft there's deep satisfaction in turning out a carefully designed and finely crafted racing machine. Completed racebikes have a way of exuding the most elegant mechanical potency when everything comes together just right. They can appear so seamless and elemental that it becomes even more of a mystery to explain where all the time and

continued on page 77

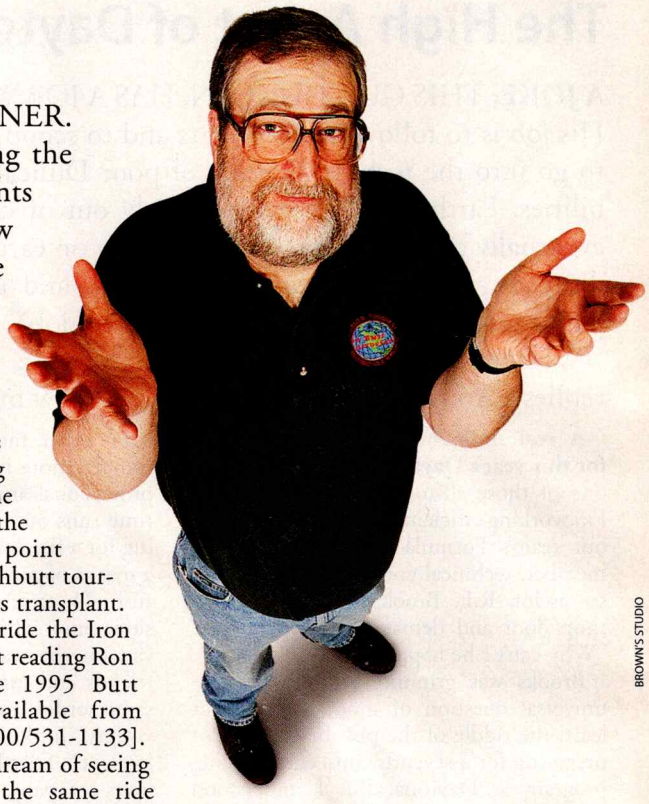


megaphone

by Jerry Smith
Contributing Editor

The Long Run

I'M NOT WHAT YOU'D CALL A SLOW LEARNER. I got wise to the whole bread-knife-in-the-toaster thing the first time I tried it. And based on some early experiments with garage roofs and umbrellas, these days I know enough to open the umbrella *before* I jump off the garage roof, instead of on the way down.



BROWN'S STUDIO

But, despite 32 years in the saddle, I recently discovered I'm only just learning how to ride.

Oh, I have the basics down. I damn well ought to by now. I've drag-raced, road-raced, crashed more dirt bikes than I can remember—which gives you an idea of how hard some of those crashes were—and worked on the staff of three different motomags, including this one. But when it comes to riding, really *riding*, I still have a lot to learn.

This reassessment of my skills came about as a result of doing research for a mystery novel I'm writing. The action takes place during an event not unlike the real-life Iron Butt Rally (IBR). The IBR lasts 11 days during which the competitors will rack up anywhere from 10,000 to 14,000 miles depending on their stamina, luck and tolerance for sleep deprivation. It is an event that, if it involved anyone but motorcyclists (who are already thought by the general public to be lunatics) would rival bungee-jumping with anvils as a world-class Totally Insane Idea. Consider this: The only way to get into the Iron Butt Association (IBA) is to ride, at minimum, 1000 miles in 24 hours or less, a feat appropriately called a Saddlesore.

I logged onto the IBA Web site (www.ironbutt.com) in search of background information about the rally, and I stumbled on the modestly named "Archive of Wisdom." The AOW, as it's also called, contains within its cybercovers the hard-won knowledge of a select group of hard-core long-distance, or LD, riders who will do just about anything—such as wearing catheter tubes and equipping their bikes with auxiliary fuel tanks and global-positioning satellite receivers—for the pleasure of staying in the saddle long past the point where your average squashbutt touring guy would need an ass transplant.

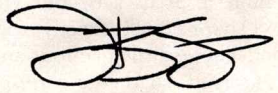
I have no ambition to ride the Iron Butt—hell, I got tired just reading Ron Ayres's book about the 1995 Butt [*Against the Wind*, available from Whitehorse Press at 800/531-1133]. But just because I don't dream of seeing the sun rise twice on the same ride doesn't mean I didn't learn a few things from the AOW.

Since stumbling on the AOW, I have learned to stretch the amount of time I can comfortably spend in the saddle by staying hydrated, eating right and knowing when to pull over and rest. Now, on any ride that'll last longer than a couple of hours, I put a CamelBak bladder in the pocket of my Aerostich Darien jacket, and sip water steadily as I ride instead of gulping it at stops. I take Ibuprofen before I get on the bike, not after I start hurting. I snack on fruit and granola bars along the way instead of chowing down at Roachburger's. When I feel tired I pull over and rest for 10 minutes. If I feel really tired I stretch out on a picnic table, or the ground, and take what the LD guys call a "power nap."

...it's damned odd to feel like a rookie again, and to realize I still have almost as much to learn about riding as I already know.

In the meantime, my interest in riding has been renewed. That old been-there-done-that feeling has been replaced by a desire to get out and see what I can do, stretching the number of miles I ride until I bump into my limit for that day. Those limits are getting higher, too, and though I don't plan on sending in my Iron Butt entry any time soon, I rode my own Saddlesore last June.

With more than three decades of riding under my belt, it's damned odd to feel like a rookie again, and to realize I still have almost as much to learn about riding as I already know. But with any luck I have half my life still ahead of me, and as Mark Twain once said, "If you can't make it to 70 by a comfortable road, don't go." I intend to do my best to get there, and the Archive of Wisdom has upped the odds of doing it not only comfortably, but on two wheels, too.

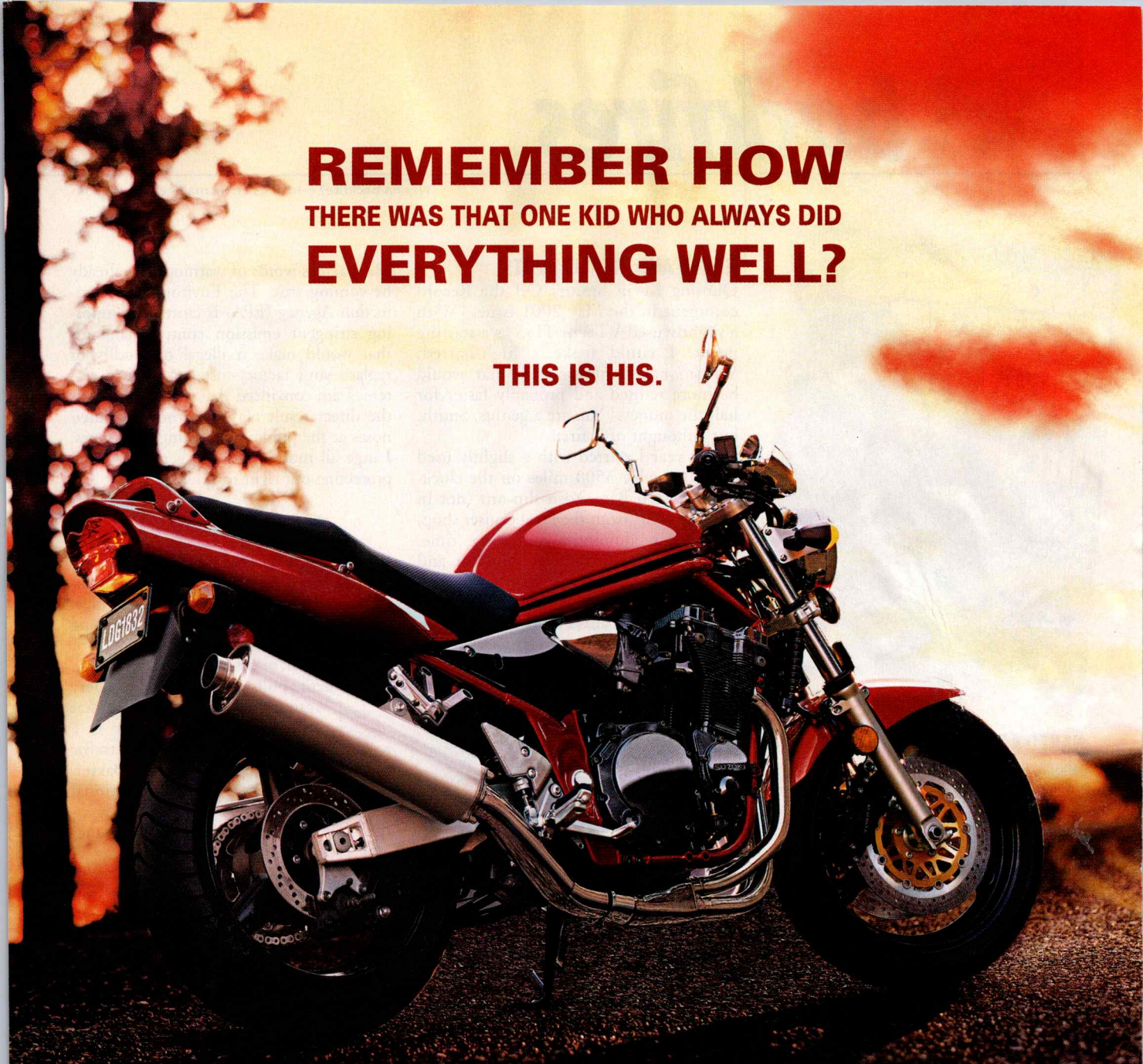


REMEMBER HOW

THERE WAS THAT ONE KID WHO ALWAYS DID

EVERYTHING WELL?

THIS IS HIS.



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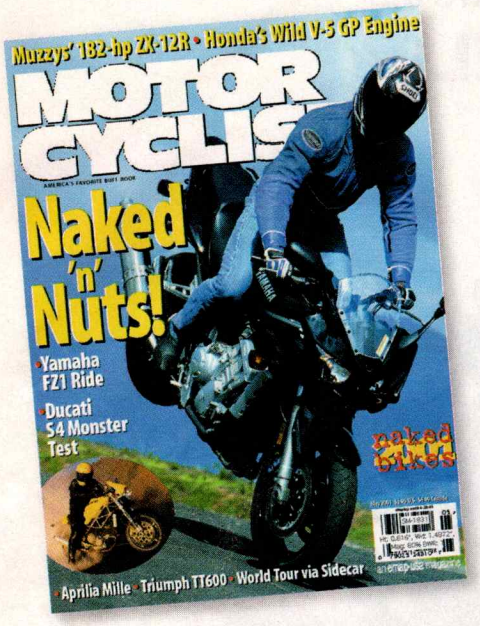
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NAKED AGAIN!

Thank you Mr. Burns! I was about to get rid of my impeccable 2000 YZF-R1 and order up a new FZ1 to keep my girlfriend happy when I read your comment that the FZ1 is an R1 for the masses—especially the masses that have never sampled an R1! That's all I needed to know. *Woo hoo hoo*! I'm keepin' the R1! Boy, is my girlfriend gonna be *pissed*! *Woo hoo*!

Charles M. Dawson
Via e-mail

I'm shocked. Writing about safety is one thing, but doing so in a magazine chock full of photos of staffers doing wheelies and stoppies is the height of hypocrisy!

Bill Stein
Via e-mail

Really, really impressed with the photography in the May 2001 issue. The Monster S4 stuff was especially excellent; it got my pulse rate going quick enough that I got my CBR600 out early and went riding in really nasty weather. You guys are keeping me *alive*. Thanks!

Matthew Stone
Seattle, WA

There's been a lot of use of the word "naked" lately in your magazine. How about a full-color pictorial of the latest naked bikes with you guys, also naked? (Especially Cook…he's hot!)

Hillary Dodge
Denver, CO

NAKED AND (REALLY) NUTS!

Quoting Kevin Smith's Off the Record comment in the May 2001 issue, "With a slightly used VTR or TL-S as a starting point, I could make a high-barred, V-twin, naked roostmeister that would be more refined and probably faster for half the money." You are a genius, Smith, but I thought of it first!

Last year I started with a slightly used TL1000S with 3500 miles on the clock. I added Heli Bars, Yosh slip-ons (not in photo), lights from the local cruiser shop, some scrap aluminum and some time. I now have a distinctive, fun, fast and comfortable ride that's way more bike than I will ever need or use. I love it when someone thinks it's an SV or Duck and then realizes it's not. Total expenditure: $5775, which is 44 percent of the cost of a new S4. Just think what

I could do with the extra $7000-plus? Marchesinis, Öhlins suspension, carbon body parts, more power, etc. Suzuki, make this bike! (On second thought, don't… I like the fact that mine's different!)

Ric Bergstrom
Richmond, VA

BURNING EYEBALLS BURN UP

James Baxter hit the nail on the head in his Megaphone column [May 2001]. If we don't strive to get along with the non-motorcycling public, we could very well find ourselves regulated out of existence. I don't really see high-beam use during daylight hours as a big issue, but straight pipes and loud exhaust systems are a major irritant to cage drivers, pedestrians and residents. In fact, Mr. Baxter's words of warning may already be coming true. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is currently proposing stringent emission control standards that would make it illegal to modify or replace your factory-installed exhaust system. I am convinced that this legislation is the direct result of those who snub their noses at the public by running loud pipes. I urge all motorcyclists to get involved in protecting our right to ride.

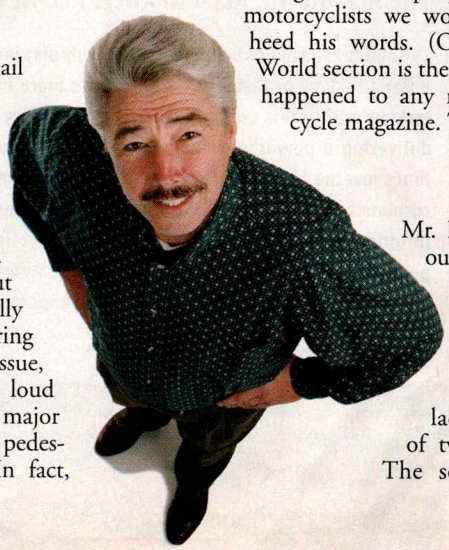
Sam Eberhart
Via e-mail

Is Jim Baxter for real? Each day on my morning commute to work I see the typical inattentive motorist drinking coffee, eating food, applying makeup, applying nail polish, talking on a cell phone, or reading a book or newspaper while driving. And recent polls conducted by safety groups and others indicate that the inattentive motorist is a major cause of today's traffic accidents. Yet here's Baxter, President of the National Motorists Association, threatening motorcyclists with a sanctioned extinction because of bikers' use of loud pipes and/or bright headlights. Did it ever occur to him that we're trying to gain the attention of brain-dead motorists who do everything in their vehicles but drive attentively?

Edward Birch
Via e-mail

Thank you very much for having the *cojones* to publish Baxter's column. He's right on the mark. I know you'll receive flames galore from people in denial, but as motorcyclists we would all be wise to heed his words. (Oh yeah, The Real World section is the best thing that ever happened to any mainstream motorcycle magazine. Thanks again.)

Philip Hamm
Centreville, VA



Mr. Baxter: Riding with our brights on is not an "us against them," nose-thumbing gesture at motorists. It's just one response to motorists' lack of recognition of two-wheeled traffic. The sooner you realize

that it is about saving our lives and not pissing people off, the sooner we may coexist in harmony.

Charles M. Dawson
Bella Vista, AR

I am very disappointed in Baxter's "Burning Eyeballs" piece. Equating high-beam headlight usage with loud pipes is not only ludicrous, it's irresponsible, and a serious disservice to younger readers. The Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) teaches the importance of making yourself visible to other motorists, and recommends high-beam headlight usage for this reason. I, too, have ridden motorcycles for many years. Know what? The only people who have ever had anything to say about it have been other bikers. No car driver has ever said anything to me, flashed his lights or in any way indicated displeasure. Know why? Here's a little secret: Car drivers do not enjoy colliding with motorcyclists. It dents their cars, smashes their windshields and upsets the hell out of them. Car drivers actually appreciate bikers who use their high beams because they make themselves easier to avoid running into. Forget about annoying other drivers with high beams; they want you to use them, and appreciate you doing so. I saw a young guy on a sportbike today running only his low beams. You could barely tell the lights were on and they were doing nothing to help him be seen. I would like to tell him, and every biker, to go ahead and run your high beams. You are not annoying anyone, and the vast majority of car drivers appreciate you making yourself easier to see.

Harry Clark
Hornell, NY

Shame on you for printing Baxter's column. I've been riding for more than 40 years, still dust the pegs on my VF1000R, and have held a SCCA National Competition License for 35 years. Most of the reason I pay more to insure my 15-year-old motorcycle than I do for three new cars is brain-dead organ donors who thought their right to spatter their brains didn't affect anyone else. When insurance companies instantly waive liability for head injury when helmets aren't worn, then I'll start to be persuaded. I wear my helmet when I ride to the end of my driveway!

How can you in any good conscience support the right of these idiots to raise my insurance rates? All of society, including the car drivers we all worry about, pays when brain injury occurs because of this irresponsibility. We all (I hope) buckle our seat belts, and are happy for our air bags when the other guy does wrong; why on earth wouldn't we follow the same basic survival behavior on our bikes? If, as Baxter suggests, we lose 10 percent, I say good riddance; we're better off without the image they leave with the car people (who don't think we're in our right minds anyway). I live in Minnesota, one of the few states that actually repealed its helmet laws. I personally have lost two acquaintances in the last three years, one dead and the other in a "persistent vege-

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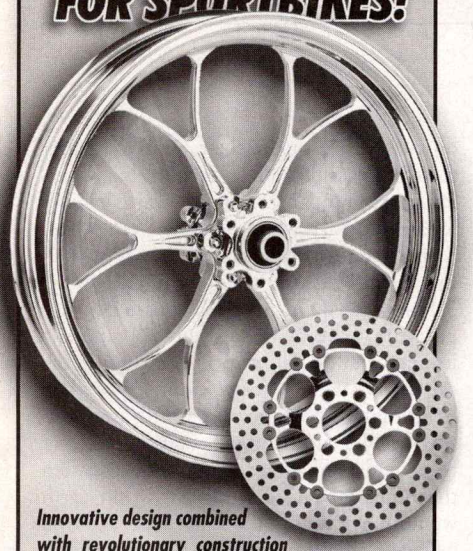

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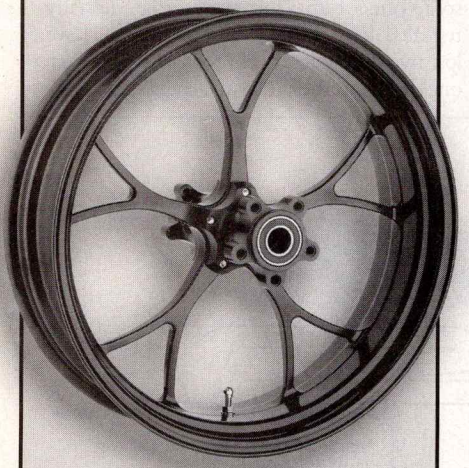

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backfires

tative" state; no helmets in either case. Sorry, no sympathy from me. Come on, guys, you and the rest of the motoring press have got to get on the right side of this one.

Zane Emstad
Via e-mail

Motorcyclists are small in numbers, and an easy target for our *worst* enemy: lawmakers. Baxter touched on government intrusion of our sport. But he should have gone further and stressed the best way to combat more encroachment: Join a motorcyclist rights organization (MRO) that is fighting for our freedoms. Rider-safety programs, public-awareness campaigns and meeting with elected officials unite these MROs. Republican, Democrat, whatever; join an MRO. Your annual dues will not be wasted.

Marty Johnson
Chico, CA

HURT REPORT ERRATA

I'd like to address what I believe are serious errors regarding the *Hurt Report* in Art Friedman's "Is Safety on Your Agenda?" Megaphone piece in the April 2001 issue. First, the *Hurt Report* did not cost $2 million. The original contract award for the basic accident research project, based on our competitive proposal, was in the amount of $381,754. Additions were made at a later date for the additional work of on-scene, concurrent exposure data collection and the preparation of a videotape ("Motorcycle Safety, Helmet Effectiveness") in the amount of $120,060, bringing the total amount of the study to $501,814. The $2 million number cited in the piece is not representative of our frugal research effort on behalf on motorcyclists in the United States. (Like most motorcycle people, we can work cheaply when we are doing something about motorcycles we really enjoy!)

In addition, the statement that "To do it today would probably cost $20 million" is also seriously in error by about one decimal place. Such a reckless statement is possibly damaging to the prospect of any support for another study. The problem is that potential sponsors for motorcycle safety research will read or hear these erroneous dollar amounts and likely give up and go away. Or they may try to find cheaper ways to do the research, with researchers *who are not motorcyclists*, and come up with all sorts of screwball findings.

Finally, the statement "Will the motorcycle industry pony up for a study that will probably find flaws—and possibly fodder for lawsuits—in its products?" indicates an incredible lack of knowledge of the *Hurt Report* results as well as applications. Rather than any part of the research creating legal peril for a manufacturer through a lawsuit, most of the research data were applied in the *defense* of frivolous lawsuits by most of the manufacturers.

Hugh H. Hurt, Jr. (a.k.a. "Harry")
Professor Emeritus,
University of Southern California
President,
Head Protection Research Laboratory

TEAMSTERS

Thanks for the Street Savvy piece on truck tire blowouts. I've logged more than two million miles driving tractor trailers, and, for the most part, I can honestly say that truckers respect bikers a great deal. Hell, you're the only people out there, besides us, who have enough sense to be scared. When it comes to blowouts, I have only one thing to say: Be afraid! Be very afraid!

Several years ago, while I was stopped for an accident on a snow-covered highway, a young girl lost control of her car and slammed into the rear of my trailer. The result of the crash was that she received a moving violation, a badly twisted ankle and a car that was damaged beyond repair. The only thing damaged on my trailer was the bumper, and it wasn't anything that couldn't be fixed with a surface grinder and some paint.

A couple months later, I blew a trailer tire and that same bumper was twisted into a pretzel and completely destroyed, along with a good deal of the trailer's undercarriage and subframe. The logic here is easy to follow: The bumper destroyed the car; and then the tire destroyed the bumper. I don't even want to think what the tire's explosion would have done to

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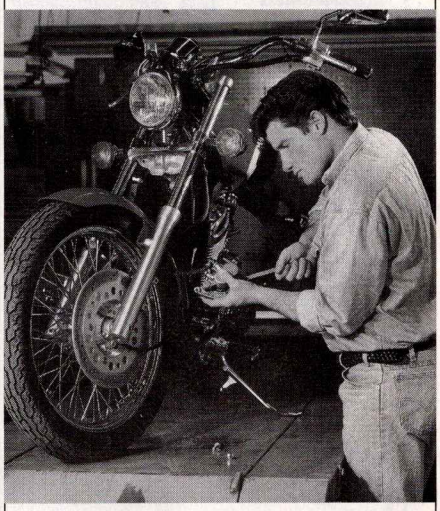

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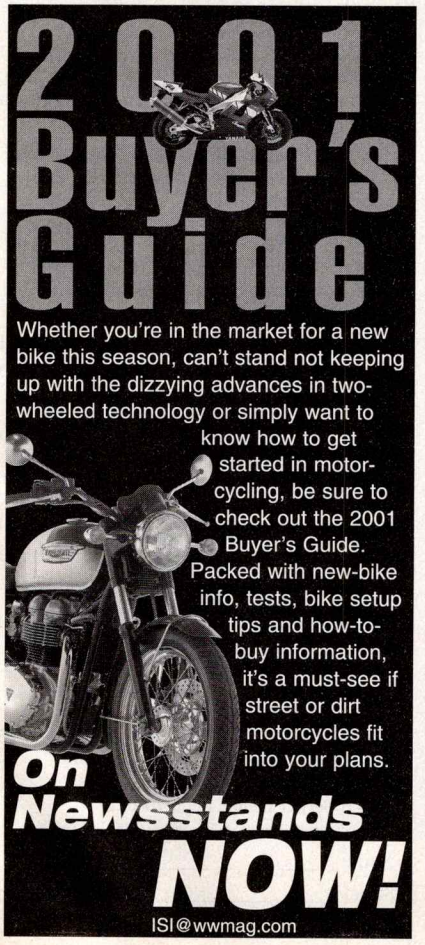
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Whether you're in the market for a new bike this season, can't stand not keeping up with the dizzying advances in two-wheeled technology or simply want to know how to get started in motorcycling, be sure to check out the 2001 Buyer's Guide. Packed with new-bike info, tests, bike setup tips and how-to-buy information, it's a must-see if street or dirt motorcycles fit into your plans.
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backfires

flesh and bone.

One more thing to think about: If you happen to be close by when the sidewall of a steel-belted radial blows, you'll probably be torn to shreds by thousands of razor-sharp steel threads traveling at, or near, the speed of sound. Like I said, "Be afraid! Be very afraid!"

Kevin Youngquist
Via e-mail

FOLLOW THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD

I get several magazines each month, but the overhead photos for your columns are butt ugly. Boehm looks like he fell off the set of the *Wizard of Oz* with that huge head, short torso and those tiny pointed feet.

Mark Kinderman
Madison, WI

We could only fit him in the studio on end. —Sr. Ed.

ROB AND DAFNE

Just finished reading "Living Your Dream" in the May 2001 issue. I really

wish I'd been with Rob and Dafne. What a great adventure!

Richard M. Lowe
St. Louis, MO

Why is it, oh enlightened editorial know-it-alls, that *Motorcyclist* is, as you say, "a bit of a traveling-biker magnet of late?"

Mitchell Stokes
Cleveland, OH

Maybe they're attracted to Munchkins? Or they wanna learn how to fall off GSX-Rs?—Ed.

MOTIVATION

I'm not the type of guy to question another man's motivation for adventurous exploits, but when I saw the photo of Keith's partner and coauthor of "The Road to Moscow" on page 85 in the April 2001 issue, I didn't think bikes and natural scenery were the only things keeping this guy going around the world.

Tom Barrett
Via e-mail

Page 85, you say? Hmmm. We didn't notice. —Ed.

GOOD ADVICE

Just wanted to let you know I enjoyed April's Street Savvy column ("Practice Random Acts of Negligence"). Many years ago in a discussion about defensive driving, my little brother taught me to pretend I was an invisible person on the road, and everyone else's job on the road was to try to kill me. It has kept me safe for years!

Carmen Steigman
Farmington Hills, MI

YOU'RE WELCOME

Thank you for posting the 0–60 mph times. I can finally shut up my friend who owns a Lexus IS300.

Jon I.
Honolulu, HI

I really enjoy the technical and riding tips. You prove a person can love bikes *and* have a brain.

Nigel
Via e-mail

ON THE ATTACK

To Mr. Boehm: Because I am a "skinny, jockey-esque rider" that you "love to hate so much," (Lean Angle, April 2001), I won't be renewing my subscription. Having a bigot such as you in an editorial capacity really scares me. Next, you will probably confess to thinking that minorities shouldn't be on motorcycles, or that female riders should stay out of your way. Someone with your prejudices can't possibly last long in an editor capacity.

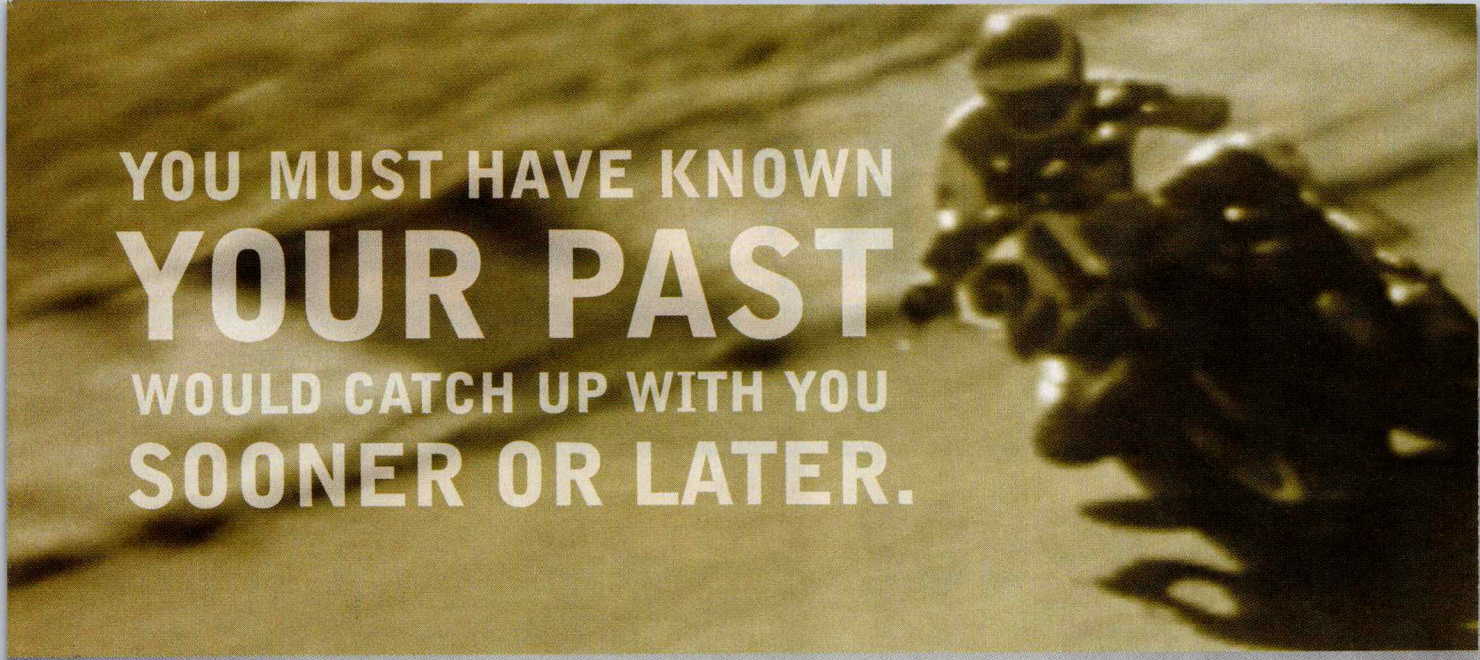
Jim Truchon
North Olmstead, OH

It's called sarcasm, *Jimbo. Heard of it? (Good idea 'bout the women and minorities, though.)—Ed.*

Re: "Bonehead in a Hurry" (May 2001). Here's the editor of a major motorcycle magazine condoning dangerous and illegal activity. Boehm stated, "My usual practice when approaching an intersec-

continued on page 105

YOU MUST HAVE KNOWN YOUR PAST WOULD CATCH UP WITH YOU SOONER OR LATER.



The new ZRX1200R

The big-bore muscle bike era may be gone, but the past never leaves you. So we plucked the highly coveted KZ1000R from your memory, modernized it, and relaunched it in '99 as the ZRX1100. Which *Cycle World* named "Best Standard" streetbike 2 years running and *Motorcyclist* called "Best Naked" streetbike in 2000. But we didn't stop there. Amid the praise we added 13% more horsepower, a new pressed-tube aluminum swingarm for increased rigidity, and an upgraded suspension. So here's the new ZRX1200R. Parked at the intersection of past and present.

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Up to Speed

compiled by
Josh Norem

JAPAN: Don Helle **EUROPE:** Alan Cathcart and Roland Brown **MIDWEST DESK:** Darwin Holmstrom

BMW's 2002 R1150R

Boxing naked toward Lukenbach

NUDITY IS PERFECTLY NATURAL WHEN YOU'VE BEEN RUNNING AROUND in boxers for 78 years. Still, the 2002 BMW R1150 Roadster shows little evidence of its austere ancestry. Only the headlight and instruments remain from the original R1100R. Starting with a stronger engine and all-new brakes, everything else adds up to a much more forceful presentation of the basic boxer ideal.

FIRST RIDE

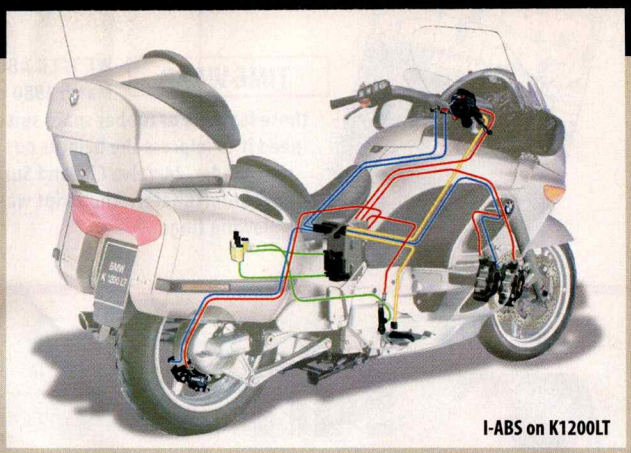
Think of the '02 Roadster as an urbane version of BMW's omnivorous R1150GS. The same 1130cc boxer that surfaced in the '00 GS—along with a shorter version of the GS Paralever driveline and its six-speed gearbox—makes a claimed 85 horsepower at 6750 rpm, which is five more than the previous 1085cc version. Revamped Telelever front suspension gets a new control arm and a shock with adjustable rebound damping. Five-spoke cast-aluminum wheels come from the R1100S.

Brakes are BMW's biggest news. The Roadster debuts the sportier "partial" version of BMW's new EVO linked braking as standard equipment and carries the long-awaited electrohydraulic Integral ABS system on its option list. Squeeze the brake lever and EVO cues all three discs: two 320mm front rotors and one 276mm in back. Only the brake pedal, however, actuates the rear disc. Meanwhile, Integral ABS monitors compare and modulate internal brake-line pressure for optimal braking at both ends.

The '02 Roadster's lower handlebar, more-rearset footpegs and 30.3-inch seat height chart comfortably sporty ergonomics if you're under five-foot-eight. Beyond that, the optional taller seat isn't quite tall enough; the R1100R's adjustable seat is absent.

On the bright side, the GS-derived boxer cranks out a steadily escalating torque supply between 3000 and 7000 rpm, with a giddy little rush at 6000 rpm

BMW's Integral ABS



I-ABS on K1200LT

GRAB THE BRAKES ON A 2002 BMW touring rig and it stops, despite white knuckles on the lever, slippery pavement and 279 pounds of Cousin Ida riding shotgun. You get the credit, but Integral ABS did the work, continuously computing the right amount of braking force for each wheel and compensating for the fuel, luggage and people on board.

That makes the pressure modulator housing the ABS's heart and brains a busy place. Inside, a pair of electromagnetic control valves (one for the front wheel and one for the rear) maintain optimal braking pressure when you can't. Once ABS III electronics sense a wheel locking up, the control valve in question cuts hydraulic pressure just enough to keep it moving *in less than 80 milliseconds*. On rough surfaces such as cobblestones, the computer can cut response time to 50 milliseconds.

Designing ABS function into the control valves themselves creates a nine-pound system (vs. 13 pounds for ABS II and 25 pounds for the first-generation '88 system) that responds more quickly. Additionally, each wheel's brake servo builds hydraulic pressure more quickly, with no creepy pulsing. According to BMW, lever/pedal effort is cut in half compared with ABS II. Sporting BMWs get a partially integrated version of ABS III. The handlebar lever still cues all three calipers, but the foot pedal controls only the rear brake. Even so, ABS III is officially listed as an active safety system, not a performance enhancement.

—T.C.

to keep corner exits interesting. Progress through the six-speed gearbox is largely optional but noticeably smoother than with the previous five-speed. An overdrive top cog (standard in the United States but optional in Europe) lets the engine loaf at posted freeway speeds.

Now, punch the speedo needle into triple digits, check the mirrors for slackers and grab a large hand/foot full of brake. Once your eyeballs retreat to their sockets, it's clear that this chunk of technology will take some serious getting used to. While two fingers on the lever simulate an F-14 carrier landing, normal braking is a one-finger thing—wet pavement or dry—with none of the spastic violence BMW's second-generation ABS inflicted when its antilock computer kicked in.

The rest of the 559-pound (wet) package is considerably less surprising. As with the 1100R, steering is light and quick enough to avoid the inevitable bovine cross traffic. New shocks at both ends strike a better balance between comfort and control, and little niceties (such as the miracle of heated grips, an analog clock and a handy knob for on-the-fly rear spring preload adjustments) prove naked needn't mean stripped. A $9990 price tag (add $2200 for Integral ABS) parks the new Roadster right between Ducati's $12,995 S4 Monster and Yamaha's $8499 FZ1—though we doubt the Roadster will be cross-shopped with these nudie bikes. What's more important is that one of BMW's most elemental models has come in for comprehensive improvements and an elegant restyling that fairly shouts, "Let's be naked, it's fun." *—Tim Carrithers*

2002 BMW R1150RT

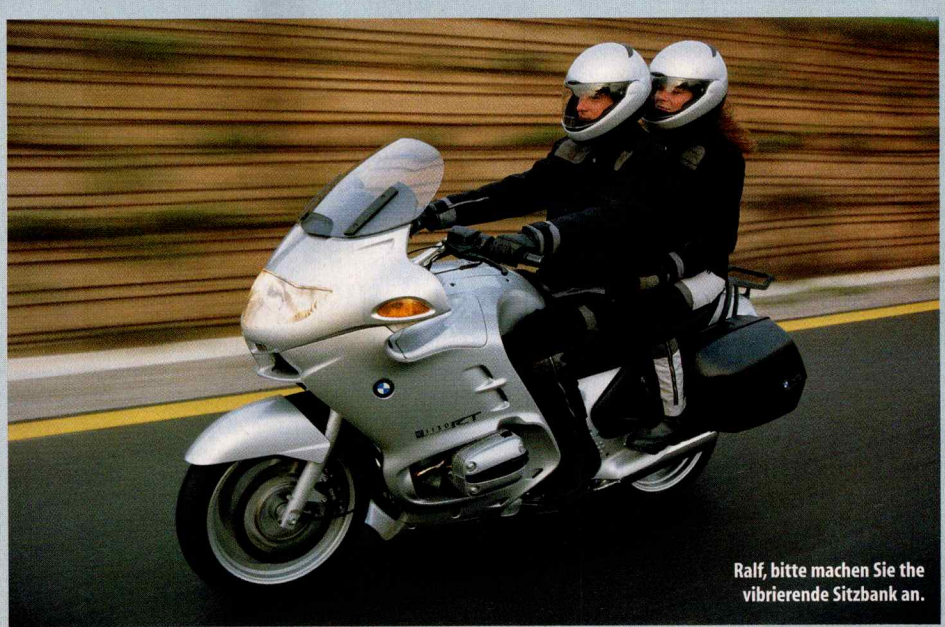
Facelift for an old friend

THE NEW PROFILE GETS YOUR attention first: a resculpted upper fairing with dual reflector-type headlamps, flanked by standard fog lights. A closer look at the most successful tourer in BMW history reveals five-spoke wheels from the R1100S and new linked-braking hardware with full Integral ABS control. Discreet R1150RT insignia above each 565cc cylinder tag the boxer-in-residence as a new six-speed GS-derived 95-horsepower unit, generating 90 percent of its claimed 74 foot-pounds of torque between 3000 and 6500 rpm.

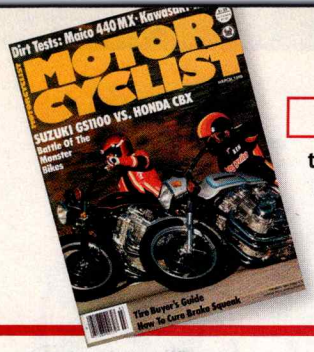
As a result, there's enough off-idle torque to spin the rear tire on cold pavement. Adjourning to a swath of vehicular chaos Texans call Interstate 35, the new fairing's electrically adjustable windscreen does a much better job of ushering wind around the rider. A final-drive ratio slightly less than the Roadster's (internal transmission ratios are identical) parks the tach needle at 4000 rpm at a smooth 80 mph in overdrive, a.k.a. sixth gear. Drop to fifth gear and twist it. The bigger boxer easily overpowers an R1100RT brought along for perspective.

The full Integral ABS system cues all three discs via lever or pedal. Choose the lever. With practice, you get past its vague initial feel and warm up to the idea of a computer managing the most astonishing set of brakes ever bolted to a touring bike. The pedal turns that braking power on like a switch. Trail braking into corners is no longer an option. The price of all this is $16,290 including ABS III, an adjustable seat and levers, hard bags, and a luggage rack. More power, updated styling and higher-tech brakes… looks like the most popular BMW tourer ever will keep its title.

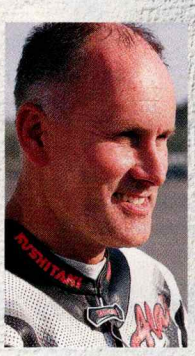
—T.C.



Ralf, bitte machen Sie the vibrierende Sitzbank an.


Dirt Tests: Maico 440 MX · Kawasaki
MOTORCYCLIST
SUZUKI GS1100 VS. HONDA CBX
Battle Of The Monster Bikes
Tire Buyer's Guide
How To Cure Brake Squeak

TIME WARP WE TALK ABOUT HOW FAR MOTORCYCLE TECHNOLOGY HAS COME, BUT LOOKING AT THIS March 1980 cover, it's clear motorcycle fashion has come even further. Excuse me, but are those leathers or rubber space suits? But clothing is overrated anyway—these two naked beasts surely didn't need it to impress the bejesus out of us in 1980 (we mean the bikes, not the testers). Said beasts were Honda's six-cylinder, 24-valve CBX and Suzuki's inline-four GS1100ET—a bike that spawned a Hollywood movie in '82. Unfortunately, the script was changed at the last minute, and the bike was changed to an alien with a glowing finger.


KEL EDGE

Euro Notes

by Alan Cathcart

CONTRARY TO REPORTS IN SOME QUARTERS, the Italian megadeal of the Euro-bike decade between Piaggio—makers of the Vespa, and owners of the Gilera, Bianchi, Puch, and now Derbi and Bultaco motorcycle marques—and MV Agusta (ditto Cagiva and Husqvarna) isn't done yet, but as of early March it's now practically certain that it will happen.

News of the MV/Piaggio link has caused concern not only at Aprilia—at which the merger is targeted, in competition terms—but also at Ducati, which risks being marginalized as a niche-product sportbike manufacturer faced with what is sure to be intense commercial pressure from two much larger, fellow-Italian, two-wheeled conglomerates, each boasting a full range of products from 50cc scooters to 1000cc sportbikes. To fend off this threat, reliable sources in Italy insist that Ducati and Aprilia have been talking about merging under the same corporate umbrella, while still remaining deadly rivals in both the showroom and on the racetrack. After Troy Corser's decisive double in the opening round of the World Superbike series at Valencia on March 11, Aprilia is very much in the driver's seat.

Ducati, however, has an even bigger decision to make: when to launch the all-new 999, successor to the current 996. The 999's short-stroke *Testastretta* engine is now in production for the limited-edition 996R as a homologation basis for the new-generation superbikes being raced this season by works riders Troy Bayliss, Ben Bostrom and Reuben Xaus. From speaking to senior company sources, it can be revealed that the decision has been made: The 999 will *not* be launched until the 2003 model year, and though Pierre Terblanche's innovative new design is ready to begin road testing in April, its production debut will be held back until Intermot '02 at the earliest. Why? Two main reasons: First, 996 sales show no sign of slowing and because all 350 customer versions of the 996R were sold within six hours on the day of its launch last September, Ducati management has decided to maximize its take on this interim model first, before introducing its replacement. So at the Milan Show in September 2001, Ducati will launch the volume-production version of the 996R, costing a lot less than the $23,307 of the individually numbered start-up series, and modified in the light of experience acquired racing the *Testastretta*-powered works superbikes this season. This volume-production bike will still retain the 996 chassis and styling used on the present bike, and will be sold alongside the current 996 models next year, and may even continue to be marketed as a less costly (but still *Testastretta*-powered) option to the 999, when it comes on line at the end of '02.

This decision also provides the basis for the second reason: time. By delaying the debut of the all-new *Testastretta* superbike, Ducati can reap maximum benefits from racing R&D, as well as ensure that Terblanche's design is completely refined and thoroughly tested, before entering production. And they'll be able to derive maximum return from the costs of developing the interim 996R model, instead of throwing the design away after building just 350 homologation specials.

Finally, what of Ducati's very-public wrestling with the question of whether to commit to GP racing in '02 when the four-stroke class kicks off?

Ducati's limited-run 996R
KEL EDGE

At the Milan launch of Ducati's World Superbike team in mid-February, company president Federico Minoli revealed the decision has been pushed back a couple of months. The delay, he explained, will give management time to weigh the likely benefits of devoting the extremely high budget needed to follow this route, without sacrificing the success of their participation in Superbike racing, which is what sells its core product. However, if Ducati does decide to go GP racing, don't assume it will be with a V-twin. There's talk of using participation in GP racing as a means of developing a range of V-four streetbikes—still with positive valve operation, of course, and almost certainly with Renault F1-type electromagnetic valve gear—which would help justify the cost of doing so in a way that racing a not-a-*Testastretta* V-twin would not. Although this would provide a ready means of expanding the company's product mix, the odds are still against Ducati doing this, because of the budget that would be needed to do it successfully—and management understands they can't go into GP racing as an R&D exercise—it's way too expensive. But it's not certain yet which way management will go.

Ducati, however, has an even bigger decision to make: when to launch the all-new 999, successor to the current 996.

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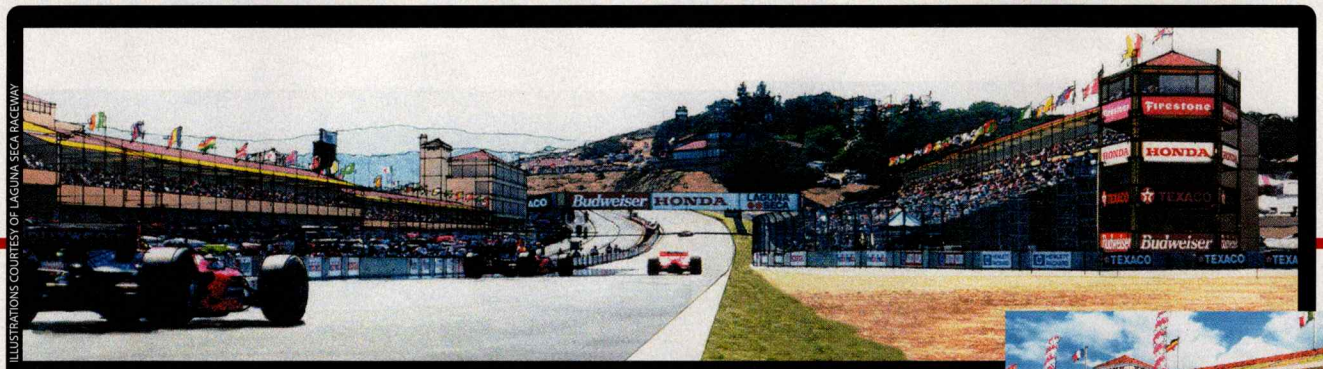

ILLUSTRATIONS COURTESY OF LAGUNA SECA RACEWAY

Laguna Seca Revamp

Luxury suites at Laguna? We're sooo there.

LAGUNA SECA RACEWAY IS ABOUT to embark upon an ambitious $15 million makeover intended to address badly needed improvements to the track's aging infrastructure. Among the scheduled updates will be 20 permanent garages, with 30 luxury suites perched overhead and an all-new Race Control/Media Center. The plan also calls for access, parking and landscaping improvements.

Funding for the improvements became possible when the racetrack inked a deal with the Monterey County Board of Supervisors and the track's operating entity, the Sports Car Racing Association of the Monterey Peninsula (SCRAMP), providing a minimum five-year term with a 25-year extension, contingent upon the completion of a sound financial plan. Mazda recently coughed up a large chunk of dough for title sponsorship of the raceway—rumored to be $7.5 million—which will go a long way toward helping the improvements materialize. "Mazda's support will allow us to take the track to the next level and to embark on a capitol improvement plan that will make it one of the finest racing facilities in the world," said Laguna Seca's general manager, John Stornetta.

As far as motorcycle fans are concerned, SCRAMP spokesman Daniel Krueger asserts that rumors of World Superbike abandoning Laguna Seca are unfounded. "There are agreements with WSC through 2004," he explains. "After all, our WSC event is the only world-class motorcycle road race in the western hemisphere so, naturally, we want to keep it here." (Krueger will use some of the funds to enroll in Geography 101.)

As of this writing, a contractor has been selected and ground breaking is scheduled for October '01. The garages are expected to be ready in time for the '02 season, with the luxury boxes to follow by the end of the year. —*Don Jensen*

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Yamaha's Four-Stroke GP Bike!

WE EXPECTED HONDA TO ANNOUNCE ITS NEW FOUR-STROKE GP ENGINE in January, but we didn't expect Yamaha to blatantly flaunt its new GP bike in front of the cameras so soon. Code-named 0W-M1, the machine sports a chassis based on the YZR500's twin-spar Deltabox design, as well as Yamaha's trademark five-valve head. Yamaha officials state the new bike has already demonstrated faster acceleration and higher top speed than the YZR500. When asked if anything from this bike may show up in a revamped R1, a spokesperson asked, "New R1?" All we know at this time is that the new GP bike is to be called the YZR-M1.

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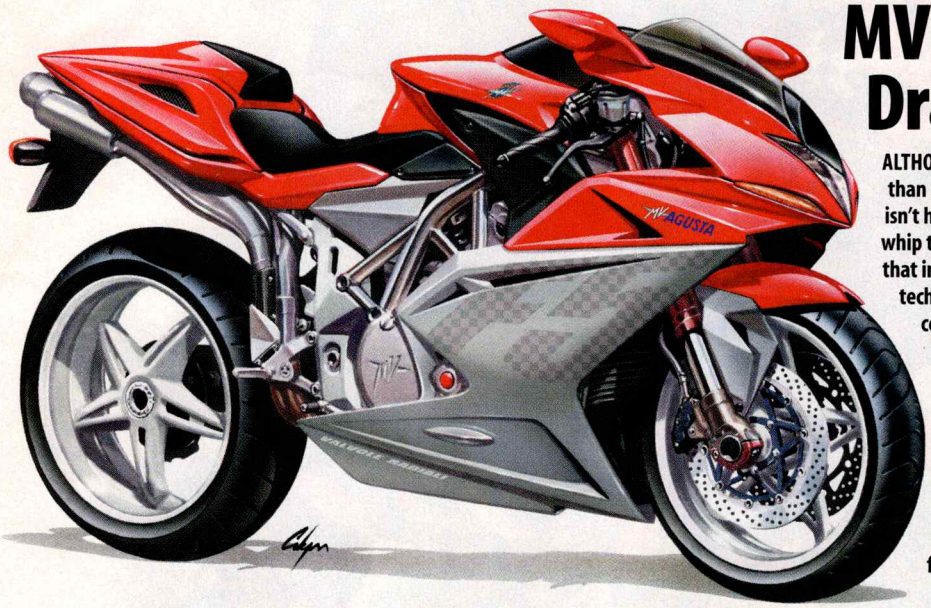
SPORT-TOURING, GRAND-TOURING, SPORT RIDING: THERE HAVE ALWAYS been many different ways to ride a motorcycle. And you can now add riding on water to that list. The Limited Edition Jetbike WX-1 1250 is being touted as the first motorcycle for the water, and though it doesn't use two wheels, it's drastically different from its personal-watercraft brethren. Two skis allow front and rear steering, the throttle is a twistgrip rather than a lever, and the mill is an inline-triple packing 1263cc of displacement. There's even a tach! The Jetbike revs up to 7000 rpm, and is capable of top speeds between 50 and 60 mph. Interested? Call (310) 522-6610 or check out www.aquajet.com for more info.



MV Agusta F5 Draws Near

ALTHOUGH EVERY SINGLE MV AGUSTA F4 SOLD FASTER than Britney Spears's concert tickets, the Italian marque isn't happy that bikes such as the new GSX-R750 can whip the pants off of it. Enter the F5: a 970cc machine that insiders say will have considerably more power and technological advancements than its 750cc predecessor. Sources say the bike is being tested right now under F4 guise, and is powered by a stroked version of the F4's inline-four for now. Reports of the new engine making 165 horsepower at the countershaft sprocket lead us to believe it will have around 150 hp at the rear tire, which puts it within striking distance of the GSX-R1000.

Production is expected to begin in the summer of 2002, with the bike scheduled to make its first public appearance at the Milan motorcycle show this fall. Watch this space.

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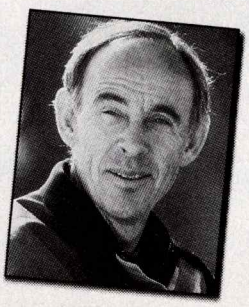
Malcolm Smith



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TEAR-OFFS

■ If you are reading this, you probably ride a bike. If you ride a bike, you should participate in the **annual Ride to Work Day**, Wednesday July 18, 2001. Why? Several reasons: to show the public how many motorcyclists there are in your city, to demonstrate that bikers come from all walks of life, that motorcycles can reduce traffic congestion and that motorcycles are used for recreation as well as transportation. To warm up for this event, the staff of *Motorcyclist* has been riding to work every day since last year's event. For more information, call (218) 722-9806 or visit www.ridetowork.org.

■ If you own a GSX-R, grab your aftermarket pipe, double-bubble windscreen and flip-flops, and head to the United Kingdom this summer for the **first ever Suzuki-sponsored GSX-R track day**. On August 3, 2001, Suzuki will open up the notorious Brands Hatch circuit for Suzuki owners of all stripes to show their stuff. Attendees will get to mingle with Suzuki-backed racers, purchase various types of motorcycle swag and camp overnight. The number of riders on the track at one time may be limited, and ticket prices have yet to be released. Owning a GSX-R is not required, just recommended.

■ According to a report in the *San Jose Mercury News*, **the California Highway Patrol (CHP) needs a few more officers to handle the amount of traffic law infractions in California**. How many officers? Oh, approximately 10,000. It seems Ponch, Jon and the rest of the CHP gang are actually writing fewer tickets today than they were in 1970, even though California's population has risen 69 percent since that time. *The Merc* reports the CHP wrote 200,000 less traffic tickets in the year 2000 than in 1970. The report also notes that a motorist had a 1-in-5 chance of being ticketed on a state road in 1970, but today those odds are 1-in-10.

■ These days, there's a group of people protesting pretty much everything. Case in point: the **Drivers Against Daytime Running Lights (DRL)**. These people hate DRLs and are calling for a boycott against General Motors to bend the automotive giant to their will. According to a press release sent out by the organization, the use of DRLs enrages drivers by blinding them. The release goes on to state, "The dazzling glare can impair other road users' vision and depth perception." Uh huh. The group is not calling on motorcycle manufacturers to stop using daytime running lights, and, in fact, says the use of DRLs by cars diminishes the effectiveness of DRLs in use on motorcycles. If you hate DRLs also, you can order a free

continued on page 89

AVON

The angle of your lean is directly proportional to the faith you have in your tires.

How to grip the road when flying 'round a curve.

OR

Getting control of the pucker factor.

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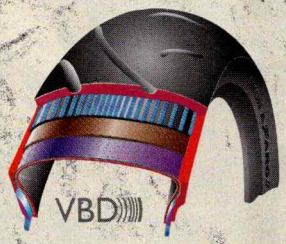

Azaro II delivers big in both confidence and performance—giving you mileage when you want it and grip when you need it. That means you can ride long and hard with unbelievable straight-line stability. And when you get the urge to lay on the throttle, Azaro II responds with a larger, more compliant footprint that resists kick out at higher lean angles. You gotta like that.

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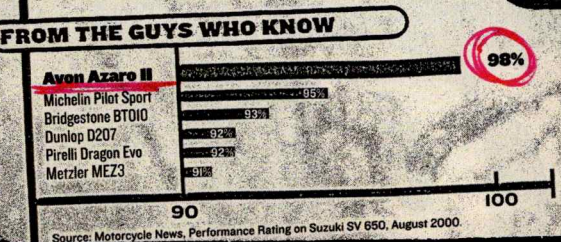
[The most credible tire test in years.]

FROM THE GUYS WHO KNOW



Source: Motorcycle News, Performance Rating on Suzuki SV 650, August 2000.

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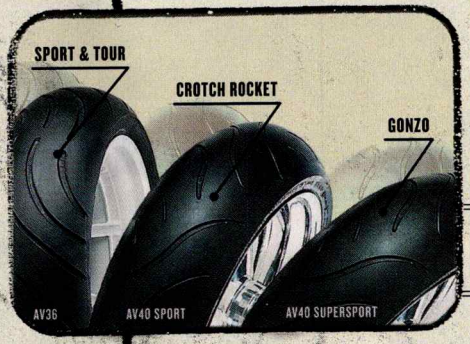
AZARO II provides 20 percent more mileage than the Azaro—ideal for those who wear out the middle of the tire faster than the edges. Hey, it happens.

AZARO II SPORT features compounds formulated for hyper-street applications. A new arched profile improves stability and offers a lighter steering response.

AZARO II SUPERSPORT is a peak performance track tire. It rides with an increased footprint to deliver improved grip at even the most extreme angles.

We'll leave "extreme" up to individual interpretation.



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110/70ZR17	140/80ZR17
120/60ZR17	150/70ZR17
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110/80ZR18	160/60ZR17B
	160/60ZR18
	160/70ZR17
	170/60ZR17A
	170/60ZR17B
	180/55ZR17
	190/50ZR17

AZARO II SPORT & SUPERSPORT

AV39 FRONT	AV40 REAR
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120/70ZR17	180/55ZR17
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EXCLUSIVE!

Aprilia RST1000 Futura

We sat by the phone, roving reporter T. Carrithers and me, for as long as we could. Scott Russell was out for a while (with damaged extremities) and Aaron Slight had opted to drive British Touring Cars instead of AMA Superbikes, leaving at least two Ducati rides open. The call could come at any time. Listen, Chili's 36 (good one, Pierfrancesco) and, as a matter of fact, Russell himself is no spring chicken. I, for one, am still approaching my peak (Carrithers, on the other hand, is showing signs of dementia). And yet…dreams of GP glory are beginning to fade—not that there's not still time to win a World Superbike title or two before the pension kicks in. What pension? Never mind. That's right, I rode Foggy's Superbike once and didn't fall off it even once. Damnit, get off the phone so Signore Tardozzi can get through!

Alas, the call did not come. Once again I found myself broken and couchbound. What'll we do to relieve the pain? Same thing we do every time that dark cloud of ignominious anonymity rolls overhead, Pinky: Have a Paxil and go for a ride for a couple days. What have we got to test this month? GSX-R2000? Yoshimura Hayabusa? Aprilia RST1000 Futura? Isn't that some sort of touring bike?

ROAD TEST

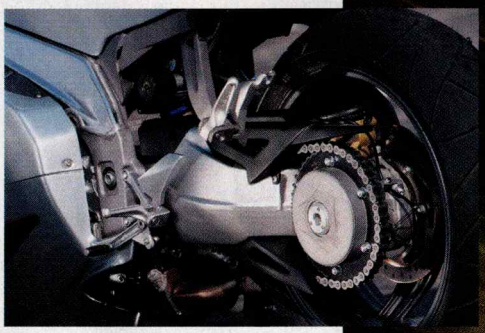
If Aprilia doesn't cut this out, it's in serious danger of becoming our favorite motorcycle manufacturer. By John Burns. Photos By Kevin Wing

Near as we can figure it's like this: Sport-touring is when you're paying the tab yourself, grand-touring is when you ride somebody else's motorcycle on the company nickel, and sport riding is what we do all the time anyway, regardless of the motorcycle. One thing we have learned is that motorcycles need have only two wheels and an engine. Once more into the breach, and pack a toothbrush. It's our own version of the California rolling blackout.

Well, there's the first thing we like very much about Aprilia's new Futura—luggage. Hard bags. The kind you won't do without once you've done with, and though Aprilia wants a lot of cake for the Futura, that $12,999 price tag includes them. Our pilot-production tester didn't have them at presstime, but in photos they look slick and integrate very nicely with the rest of the bike, depending on whether you think the rest of the bike is nicely integrated or not. For some, Futura styling revives unpleasant memories of blocky Japanese cars of the '80s. It grew on all of us after minimal exposure.

What we can say for certain is that all of the Futura's pieces fit very well together, with no tacky bits or unfinished details poking out. As a matter of fact, the thing is pretty much delicious, with pieces of polished alloy frame peeking through, distinctive wheels, a cool single-sided swingarm (with an "ergal" nut holding the wheel on), understated graphics and a beautifully wrought stainless exhaust system that's also nice and quiet, at least until you give a big yank on the throttle—then it's even more delicious. Naturally, there's a full-service instrument panel that lights up a suave dark blue and red after dark (excellent headlights, too) with outstandingly easy-to-perceive pie-chart LCD gauges for engine temp and fuel, or even ambient temperature, once you learn not to reset the clock. It's all very modern and expensive-car-like, and makes you wonder how you ever derived anything like pleasure from riding 'round on an '82 GS550 with an erratic tachometer that wandered like a glass eye. Shudder to think.

The reason you're able to achieve such penetrating rumination is simply that the ergonomics of the thing are so completely transparent that you spend no time at all thinking about your butt or



A centerstand and single-sided swingarm make tire swaps a snap, and that black knob's the preload adjuster. You have to be motoring pretty quick to drag the centerstand; pop it off and this "touring" bike could do the odd track day, no problem. Highly trick underseat exhaust leaves room for saddlebags.

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...Futura styling revives unpleasant memories of blocky Japanese cars of the '80s. It grew on all of us after minimal exposure.

your wrists, even if it's your job. California rolling blackout. It's a tall motorcycle, if that bothers you, but it matters not once your feet are retracted. And if you're more than six-feet long, you'll love this one. We don't know if it's the shape or the foam, but the broad seat approximates the consistency of the back of Rosie O' Donnell's thighs, and is excruciatingly comfortable. The riser-mounted handlebars ascend up into an angle that nobody complains about, and slightly rearset footpegs are in a spot that gives all-day touring comfort as well as aggressive back-road control. The wrap-around windscreen is nearly a windshield for five-foot-seven people, though six-foot-two Tim (who'd complain if he were hung with fresh rope) felt slight turbulence under his receding chin. Aprilia says the Futura was tested extensively in a wind tunnel, though it didn't say whether it was the famous Moto Guzzi tunnel, a company it now owns.

You've got your hydraulic preload adjuster for the rear shock, which you can grab with your hand (on the fly if you so desire) and thereby twist rear ride height just where you want it, whether it's you and the toothbrush or you and the missus, several blowdryers, many shoes and just enough room left for your toothbrush. The rear portion of the seat—resculpted for production vs. the wide-body design that debuted at Munich last year—is generous too, with enough broad support for a good-sized broad. Oh, lighten up.

That rear shock is a Sachs, which Aprilia uses on all its bikes except the upscale Mille R. And, along with the 43mm Showa fork, it provides a comfortable yet firmly damped ride, working through broken pavement like an expensive German car, aided by its most excellent throne. There's no compression adjustment at either end, but you can dial in enough rebound damping out back to positively pack the rear end down. There's plenty of adjustment range, in other words.

Wind-tunnel work resulted in a nice, big cockpit. Wide bodies would like more mirror adjustability. Sorry, no lap timer (though you might want one).

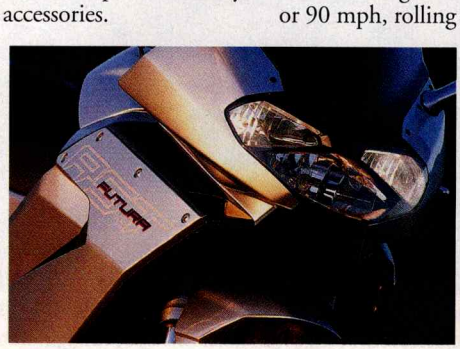
...the Futura lives for those long, winding two lanes, where you can swoop along at 80 or 90 mph, rolling the throttle off and on and letting the CHPs fall where they may.

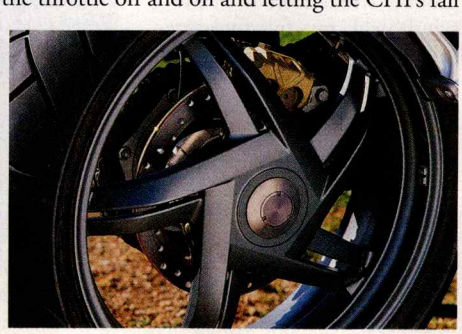
Yep, there is an engine; and what an engine it is. It's the same 60-degree, dual-counterbalanced V-twin young Troy Corser spanked everybody with at the opening round of the World Superbike Championship—almost. Aprilia revised it for sport-touring duty (grand-touring in our case) with the addition of Sagem engine-control electronics and fuel injection, which Aprilia says is the most advanced on the market. This one reads crank position every 10 degrees of rotation, and has a throttle-position/rate-of-throttle-opening sensor, etc., for precise injection and ignition timing. Many, if not most, high-performance twins can be a little snatchy at low revs, but Aprilia's goal with the RST was to make it seamless from off-idle all the way up. The RST engine uses different 51mm throttle bodies than the ones on the RSV Mille, and they feed modified intake ports designed for optimum low-rev power. A larger generator adds flywheel mass, which also smooths power delivery while providing more juice for lights and accessories.

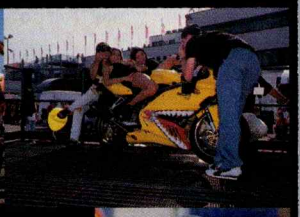
It works. You can burble down to 2500 rpm in top gear, twist the throttle wide open, and the Futura pulls smoothly away. By 2750 rpm, there are already 52 foot-pounds of torque at work, and from there acceleration is linear, highly tractable and more impressive than it looks on the dyno chart. Once past the 65-foot-pound torque peak, at 7250 rpm, the twin rips hard and loudish right up to redline.

It's not a small bike, but then it's not exactly a big one, either. And once past the aforementioned tallness of the thing, the Futura's nice and thin between the thighs and fits most humans like an Italian suit. It's slimming. At 535 pounds with the 5.5-gallon tank fully fueled, the Futura notches right in amongst things like the Honda VFR800F (515 lbs.), BMW R1100S (545 lbs.) and Triumph Sprint ST (530 lbs.). It's a good size for a sport-touring bike, really. Anything lighter gets bumped around more by the road and the atmosphere, and anything heavier begins to be less sporty. On the superslab, this one's as nice as anything short of a full-on tourer, with very little engine vibration trickling through the grips at normal American cruising speeds. At highly illegal American cruising speeds, like over 100, it begins to get a little buzzy.

Being the Euro-built travel device it is, though, the Futura lives for those long, winding two lanes, where you can swoop along at 80 or 90 mph, rolling the throttle off and on and letting the CHPs fall







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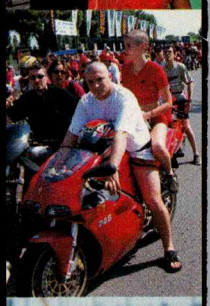


where they may. Keep rolling above approximately 60 mph and there's no need to use any gear but sixth, which is a good thing because about the only bone of contention is that the Futura's gearbox isn't the sharpest pencil in the box, needing more pressure than some to find the next gear. Otherwise, it's very difficult to be depressed aboard the Futura on a nice spring day in the California outback, rolling through orange groves and green fields of wildflowers, and scattering wild turkeys on our favorite cow-trail back roads.

Only in that sort of really tight second- or third-gear bumpy stuff does the Futura's size make itself felt, especially ridden alongside the Honda VFR800F. The VFR feels way low and "mass-centralized" next to the Aprilia, which has to travel further to get to full lean, has a heavier crankshaft and just, in general, more of everything to heave around—and, of course, ridden next to a bigger bike the Futura would feel like the VFR. Anyway, the Aprilia can keep up with the VFR in tight confines but you have to work harder to do it, you have to plan a bit more. With its smaller, revvier engine and ridiculously buttery transmission, you can just whistle into corners on the Honda, blipping down gears with or without the clutch and hard on the very nicely linked brakes, and then you can just yank the VFR throttle open again. The Futura, with its boomier motor and balkier gearbox, makes the decision to shift or not to shift harder. And though its injection works very well, the bike's extra torque down low gives the impression you might not want to whack the throttle back open lest you experience days of Futura past.

The Aprilia's suspension maintains its composure, though, even over roads that haven't seen fresh pavement since Teddy Roosevelt. Prodigious Brembos, 300mm stainless jobs in front, have enough fade-free power for us, the rear's nice and modulative, the suspension handles hard braking without going all to pieces, and the standard

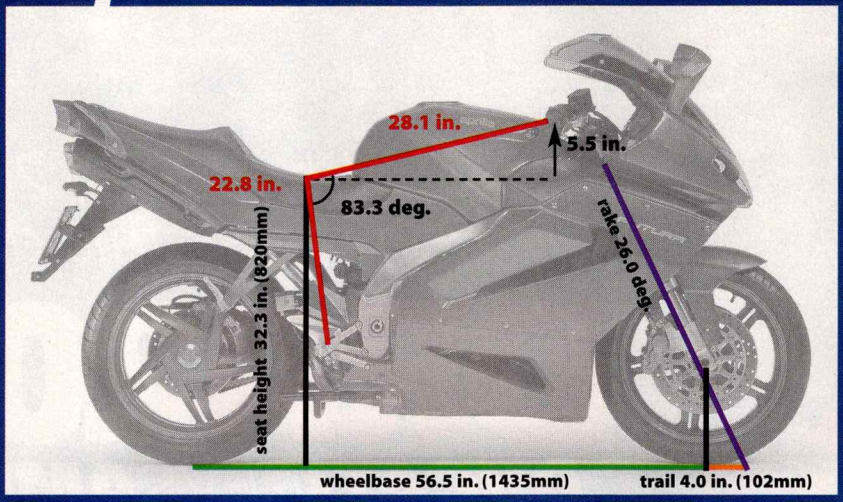
Cheers & Jeers

APRILIA RST1000 FUTURA

Engine	**8**	*99.5 hp not as much as Mille's 113.6*
Drivetrain	**8**	*Aprilia gearboxes take time to loosen up*
Handling	**8**	*Excellent for a big, 535-pound bike*
Braking	**8**	*Really good, but ABS would be nice*
Ride	**10**	*Stern dreamboat father figure*
Ergonomics	**10**	*One of the best, especially for long people*
Features	**10**	*Saddlebags, cutting-edge electronics*
Refinement	**9**	*Amazingly good for a pilot-production bike*
Value	**9**	*Cheaper than an ST4 or BMW, and better*
Fun Factor	**10**	*If fun is traveling fast*

verdict: *The more we ride this one, the more we like it. Sometimes it feels like a slightly big, but really dialed, sportbike; sometimes it's a small, sporty Gold Wing—one that does pretty good wheelies.*

Aprilia RST1000 Futura



MSRP $12,999
Warranty ..... 12 months, unlimited miles
Colors ..... blue, red, silver

ENGINE

Type ..... I-c 60-degree V-twin
Valve arrangement .. dohc, 8v
Bore x stroke ..... 97.0 x 67.5mm
Displacement 998cc
Compression ratio ... 11.4:1
Carburetion ..... Sagem electronic fuel injection, 51mm throttle bodies

details, details...

- Good heat control—no baked legs on hot days
- Yes we have a centerstand
- Instrument panel has three brightness levels and a wet bar
- Sagem system supposedly cuts pollution, and a catalyzer is standard

Transmission 6-speed
Final drive ..... #530 chain

CHASSIS

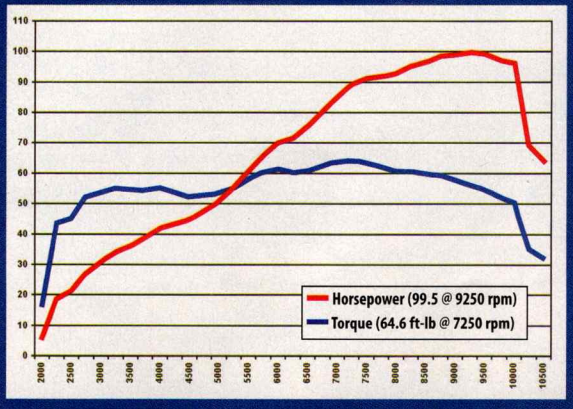
Frame ..... aluminum alloy twin spar
Weight ..... 535 lb. (wet) 502 lb. (fuel tank empty)
Fuel capacity ..... 5.5 gal.

Suspension, front ... 43mm inverted cartridge fork adjustable for spring preload and rebound damping
Suspension, rear .... single shock adjustable for spring preload and rebound damping
Brake, front ..... dual four-piston caliper, 300mm discs
Brake, rear ..... single two-piston caliper, 255mm disc
Tire, front ..... 120/70ZR17 Michelin Pilot Sport
Tire, rear ..... 180/55ZR17 Michelin Pilot Sport

PERFORMANCE

Corrected 1/4-mile* 11.09 sec. @ 123.00 mph
0-60 mph ..... 3.39 sec.
0-100 mph ..... 7.90 sec.
Top-gear roll-on, 60-80 mph ..... 4.52 sec.

Power to weight ratio** ..... 7.08 lb/hp
Fuel mileage (low/high/average) 33/45/40
Cruising range (exc. reserve) ..... 168 miles

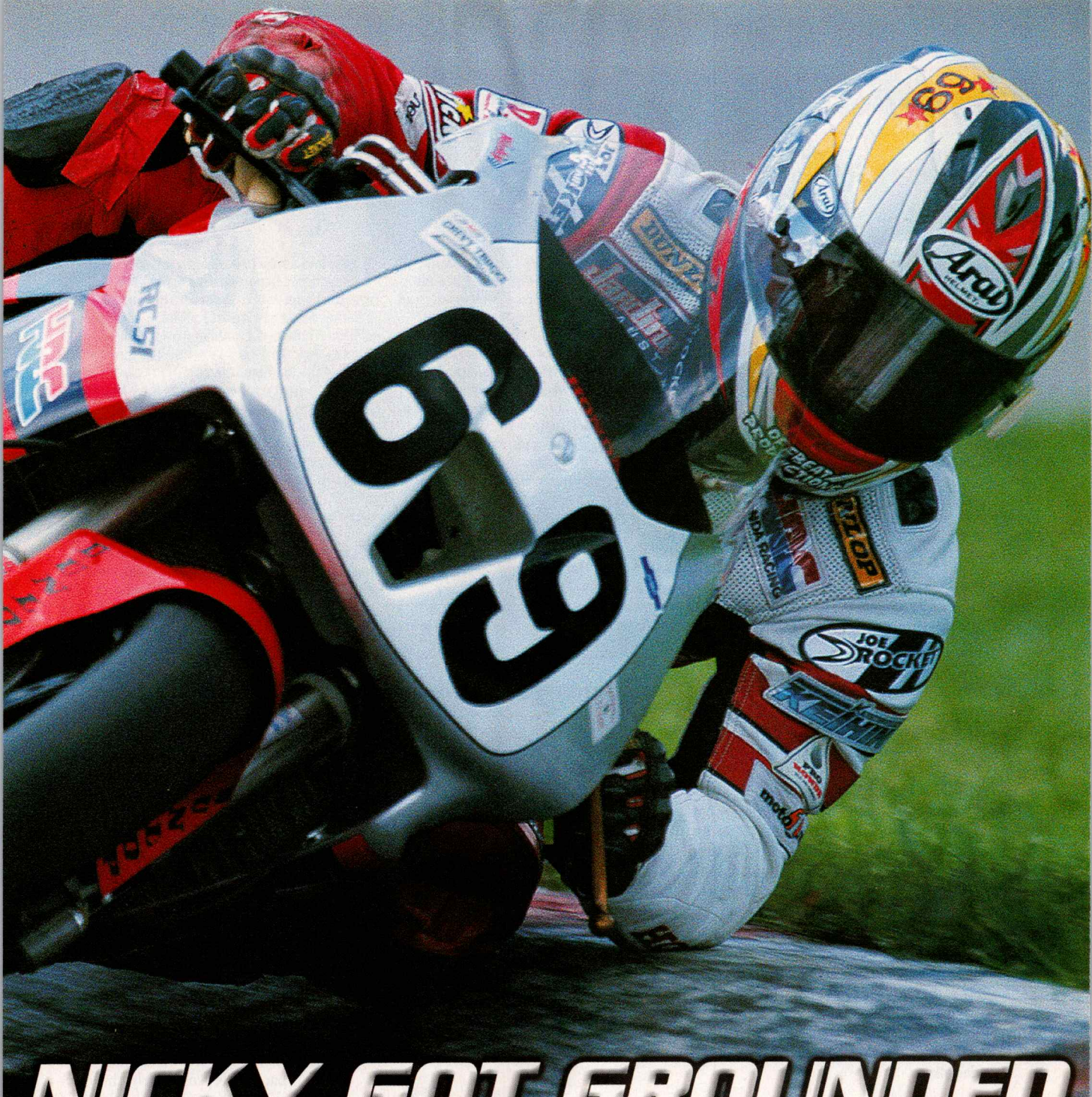


test notes

- 4.5 seconds 60 to 80 is faster than a Ducati 996 or Honda RC51
- The valve-adjust interval is 9375 miles, but the valves reputedly hold spec very well
- Oil level is checkable with a glance

*Performance with test-session weather conditions corrected to sea-level standard conditions (59 degrees F, 29.92 in. of mercury)

**Wet weight plus 170 lb. rider divided by measured horsepower



NICKY GOT GROUNDED

While Nicky can't break the rules of the Hayden house, he certainly can defy the law of physics. That's why Nicky, like other superbike stars; Tommy Hayden, Steve Crevier, Kurtis Roberts, Pascal Picotte, Larry Pegram and Jordan Szoke keep JOE ROCKET between them and the racetrack.

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Photo by Brian Nelson

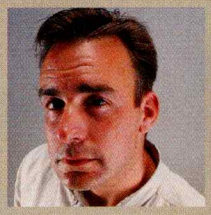
Off the Record

boehm
Age: 38
Height: 6 ft.
Weight: 225 lb.
Inseam: 32 in.
Favorite Italian export: Parmigiano Reggiano cheese

Most of you probably know of my long-standing and highly public love affair with Honda's VFR800F Interceptor. Simply put, I believe it's the best all-around sport motorcycle on the planet. (Of course, my attitude here hinges on my personal definition of *all-around*: how much sport vs. how much comfort vs. how much day-to-day ability a particular bike has.) Although the Futura doesn't compete directly with the VFR (its niche is slightly to the touring side of the 'Ceptor, and I'm not convinced many buyers will shop them both), it does emulate the VFR in many ways, not least of which is its high level of refinement and finish quality, the functionality of its engine and chassis, and its above-average degree of what I call charisma. It's also a highly unique scoot, and in an age where two-wheelers of the same ilk tend to look the same, that's quite a calling card. ***—Mitch Boehm***

norem
Age: 27
Height: 5 ft 9 in.
Weight: 140 lb.
Inseam: 30 in.
Favorite Italian export: Joe Pesci

Motorcycle touring is like sex: It's usually better with another person. So when my turn came to test the Futura, the little lady and I headed up the coast for the day. Hey, I was testing a bike—not off on some romantic getaway—I swear! Not surprisingly, the Futura proved an exceedingly adequate mount, being sportier than a Beemer, but more touring-oriented than a VFR. It really is a sport-touring bike that pays equal homage to both disciplines, and it largely succeeds. My only gripes are that it feels a little down on power two-up, and the engine vibrated enough to make my passenger grin on a few occasions. (I've never seen her do *that* before.) Its styling is not my cup of tea, however, and its bizarre cockpit and controls were simply confusing. If push came to shove, I'd take the VFR over the Aprilia, though, just because Honda's overall package—and especially the motor—feels much more refined. ***—Josh Norem***



cook
Age: 37
Height: 5 ft. 10 in.
Weight: 200 lb.
Inseam: 32 in.
Favorite Italian export: La Pavoni Europiccola espresso machine

Leave it to Aprilia to bash open the doors of the (entrenched?) sport-touring market and kick over the barrel with a pair of very Italian boots. As a former owner of a Triumph Sprint ST and a pair of BMW R1100RSes, I consider myself within the demographic Aprilia has targeted with the RST and find the machine stunning. Didn't always, though; the first few minutes with the bike were like sizing up a new college roommate. Nice guy or psycho? Cool and edgy or just plain weird?

On the road, the Futura romps. I don't like the cadence of the 60-degree V-twin as well as that of a right-angle twin—particularly because the counterbalancers don't kill all of the secondary vibration—but there begins and ends my carping about performance and refinement. For an ST, the RST is fast. Its suspension is well developed—a real sore point for me on the Sprint—and the ergonomics are spot on. Lord help the other Euro manufacturers when Aprilia hits its stride. ***—Marc Cook***

Fellow Travelers

BMW R1100S $13,990

A highly competent and distinctive sport-tourer, but not as comfortable over long distances as the Aprilia, particularly when riding two-up. And while the flat twin's a nice engine, it doesn't pack the wallop of the revvy RST twin. It's also expensive, and that price doesn't include saddlebags or ABS.

DUCATI ST4 $13,795

Tough to resist the 916 twin in this one, but it's not as civilized as the Aprilia's engine. Neither is the rest of the ST, come to think of it. The Futura looks and feels, well, *futuristic* next to the Ducati, and the desmo's frequent service intervals might not be the ticket for a touring bike.

HONDA VFR800F $9499

This one was MOTY (Motorcycle of the Year) in 1998, a year that also saw the new Yamaha YZF-R1—so you can appreciate how much we like it. It's 20 pounds lighter than the Futura but feels even smaller—more sporty than toury, in fact—and doesn't include factory hard luggage. Great bike, but maybe a bit too sensible.

TRIUMPH SPRINT ST $10,799

This Triumph's excellent blend of performance, comfort and handling comes closest to running with the Futura, and the bike's injected 955cc triple sends up a howl to rival the Italian V-twins. Like other bikes in this list, though, it suffers from semi-insipid styling. Some people like that.

Michelin Pilot Sports are excellent tires. When the tachometer gets back to the little "seven," the Futura reels in whatever gap the nimbler VFR pulled, both bikes cranking out heavenly motoracket, and it occurs to you that you're having more fun than you would on an all-out sportbike because your body doesn't hurt anywhere—and on to the next road.

The verdict, then, is that we all like the newest Aprilia very much. It seems to settle into a vacant niche in the sport-tourer range. It's not quite as sporting as a Honda VFR (yet very close), but then the more compact VFR isn't nearly the traveler the Futura is, with its hard bags and posh seat—especially if you're carrying a passenger. No BMW has the Futura's combination of horsepower and handling. The Triumph Sprint ST and Ducati ST4 are in the performance ballpark, but neither of them approach the Aprilia's interesting architecture and daring design.

This one truly wants to make you set out on the road for a while, possibly with the one you love…heck, maybe even with your wife. Unplug the coffee pot but leave the answering machine on—just in case. MC

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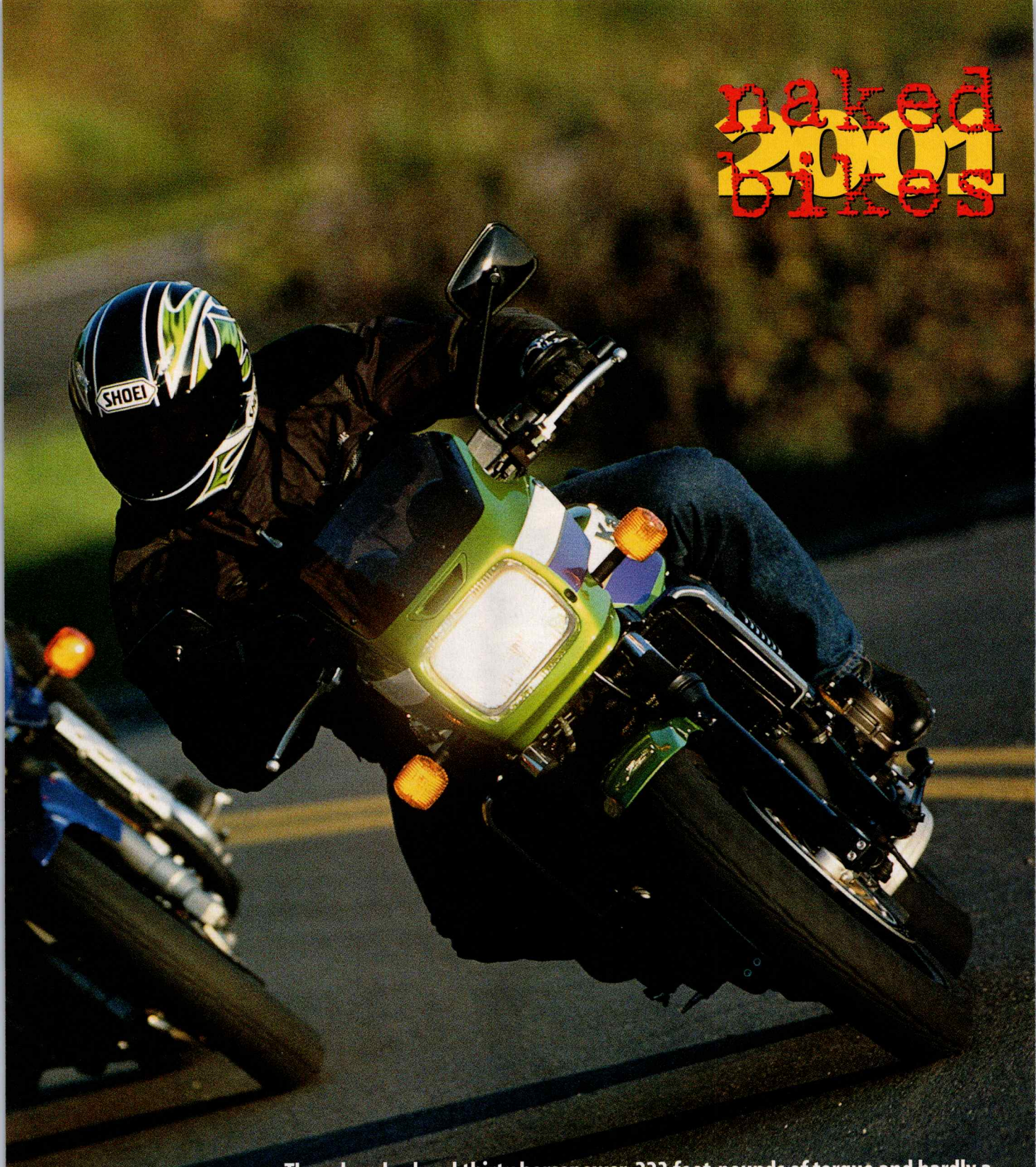
SUZUKI BANDIT 1200

YAMAHA FZ1

naked 2001 bikes



Three hundred and thirty horsepower, 223 foot-pounds of torque and hardly a stitch of clothing in sight—three brutes go belly-to-belly for domination of motorcycling's hottest new (old) segment. By Marc Cook. Photos By Kevin Wing

OH, PLEASE, DON'T CALL THEM FAT. BIG-BONED. BROAD ACROSS THE SHOULDERS. Muscular like a wrestler more than a swimmer. Powerful. Husky. Swaggering, almost. It takes mass to clomp around with the big boys—not one of these three semiclad brutes weighs less than 500 pounds with a belly full of gasoline, for cryin' out loud. In this, the great era of anorexic sportbikes, it may seem odd to witness such a clamor for what some might call full-size, yester-yachts.

naked bikes 2001

But here we are, circa 2001, and the new fashion is the old fashion in the form of the rejuvenated, reinvented do-it-all streetbike. If the popular terminology—naked bikes, retro-scoots, new standards—leaves you cold, then you old critters will probably warm up to the phrase Universal Japanese Motorcycle (UJM). Ah, that triggers a hot-fired synapse cutting through the brain carbon left by retirement plans and kids ready for college…perfect. UJMs died a long time ago, their lardy butts bullet-riddled by the Honda Interceptor and their carcasses pushed off the cliff by the Suzuki GSX-R, but a new breed is here.

Yeah, you're right. We've seen next-generation nakeds and standards in the time since the first ultrasportbikes surfaced, but they all had some fatal flaws: flabby chassis, feeble engines, retro-through-a-looking-glass styling. Each of the models fielded in the late '80s and early '90s managed—in retrospect to no one's surprise—to repel success.

Times change. Nakeds are hot and the class has grown to three Japanese entrants at the large end of the displacement class. The Suzuki Bandit we know. Way back in '97, the 1200 helped rekindle the flames of UJM passion and this year it received a major rework with a new chassis and fresh bodywork. Other manufacturers watch warily as Suzuki sells boatloads of Bandits at what seems like fire-sale prices, all the while wondering if the whole big-/naked-/basic-bike thing is the future or just a fad. It's still with us and growing rapidly. Kawasaki's introduction of the delicious—and deliciously retro—ZRX1100 in '99 and now Yamaha's big blue (or black) protuberance in the form of the FZ1 only serve to confirm what we old farts knew all along: If you want to sell us traditionally styled semisporting hardware without the squid-boy graphics and vertebrae-crunching ergonomics (that much we appreciate, honestly), you'll also need to pack them with serious performance.

Here we are, then, with three potent and rational motorcycles, bikes that exist—and will flourish, we think—because not every road is curvy and even the hardest-core sporting type tires of searching for perfect apexes between the garage and the office parking lot. These new standards are real-world, low-pretense motorcycles that will appeal to older riders hoping to recapture some of their hooliganistic youth as well as savvy newcomers who are not enticed by the design orthodoxy of the current sportbike

offerings. Indeed, each of these bikes has a distinct personality, and the differences among them are greater than we normally observe in sportbikes. Stick around and see what we mean.

SUZUKI BANDIT 1200

For the first time since the original Bandit 400, Suzuki has brought a totally naked version to the United States. And it's a peach. You already know how fond we are of the new-for-'01 Bandit 1200S from our road test last October, and we've been anticipating its naked brother since. We're not regretting the wait.

Mechanically identical in most respects to the Bandit 1200S, this new naked model is cheaper—an amazing $6999—and lighter than the half-faired version by 13 pounds. More important, though, is that there's a big chunk of mass missing from the front of the bike, so the naked 1200, in fact, seems dramatically smaller. Using the same handlebar and footpeg location as the 1200S, the straight 1200 offers the kind of semiupright riding position that's just about right for chasing groceries as well as hunting down apexes. A big chrome headlight and handsome chrome-dipped gauges are all that stand between you and the atmosphere ahead.

Downstream of the newly shorn prow, the Bandit presents familiar territory. All the major components are the same; only the suspension is changed, with a minor (six percent) increase in spring rates, front and rear. The suspension betrays the bike's low price point mainly by lack of adjustability—there's spring preload front and rear, and rebound damping only at the back—and by its bumpy-road performance. Supple most of the time, the suspension causes the bike to bound over concrete-block highways and crumpled pavement. A GSX-R this is not. Nor does it have GSX-R brakes; the Bandit's six-piston Tokicos are reasonably progressive but take a fair tug at the lever and don't seem to get with the program energetically.

Suzuki endowed the new Bandit's frame with comparatively aggressive steering geometry—at least for this class—penciling out to 25.3 degrees of rake, which, combined with the shortest-in-the-class wheelbase, partly explains the bike's superb steering. But only partly. In fact, the Bandit rolls so sweetly into corners—fast or slow, doesn't matter—that you soon realize that Suzuki has made the bike transcend the humble origins of its parts. Utterly neutral and rippling with feedback, the Bandit's steering responses are among the nicest you'll find.

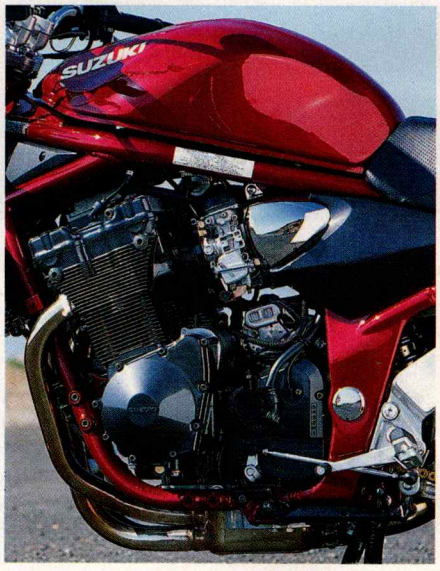
The ever-powerful and occasionally frantic GSX-R1100-based engine is in exactly the same state of torque-is-better tune as the 1200S', which means you'll have approximately 70 foot-pounds of torque at your disposal from 3500 to 7500 rpm, delivered in a seamless rush

Simple chrome-encrusted instruments are plucked from the Bandit 1200S' fairing and deposited in front of your basic regulation handlebar. Mmmm.

naked bikes 2001

that makes this 530-pound motorcycle *lunge,* not just accelerate, out of tight corners and across the intersection of Mayhem and Vine. It's the engine's apparent lack of effort, it's utter *nonchalance,* that is most impressive.

Most everything in the drivetrain plays along. Although clearly set up lean, the Suzuki's four 36mm carburetors (this year with a throttle-position sensor) meter fuel accurately and provide predictable throttle response. Clutch takeup is smooth if a bit immediate at the beginning of the lever's travel, and there's sufficient grunt right at the bottom to make stoplight getaways terrifically easy. Still, the big Bandit's engine is buzzy, and despite extreme measures (rubber engine mounts, rubber-isolated footpegs, handlebar and fuel tank) to help reduce the transmission of vibration to the rider, there remains a nasty patch of coarseness between 3800 and 4800 rpm. The five widely spaced gears are not a lot of help; several times we discovered one gear too low and the next too tall. Fifth puts normal, semilegal highway cruising right in the thick of the vibes.



That's a double dose of saddle lust goin' on there. The Bandit's basket-weave seat (above) is decently firm and large enough for recliner residents the Americas over. Bungee points are handy. GSX-R-based engine (right) pumps out the torque and, at various revs, the vibes, too. Our naked Bandit isn't as smooth as the 1200S we tested (and refused to return).

As good as this engine is, it's still the runt of the litter, which is really saying something for the other dogs. Using the oldest technology and served up in mild state of tune, the 1157cc air/oil-cooled engine tops out at 101.8 horsepower, down 15.6 hp from the class-leading FZ1's and 11 hp shy of the ZRX's maximum. And though the engine is supremely flexible, it gives the impression of being severely choked at high rpm. The torque curve plummets on the other side of 7500 rpm like a double-black-diamond ski run. Never fear: The aftermarket is stuffed with B-12 go-fast parts, thanks to the engine's GSX-R1100 roots.

All alone, the Bandit impresses mightily. Only when ridden next to the other big boys does the engine's comparative lack of grunt (particularly at the top) and the suspension's lack of savvy

begin to show. Were we to place greater significance on value, the Bandit would no doubt shimmy up the list—hell, this bike is undoubtedly the bargain of the year.

KAWASAKI ZRX1200R

If the Suzuki balances its chassis and engine performance admirably, then the Kawasaki is all about the engine, kids. It offers just about everything you could want in a big inline-four: competitive peak power, a massive slug of midrange torque, superb manners and commendable smoothness.

Why are we so smitten? Look at the ZRX's dyno charts on page 62. Its torque output towers over the others, jumping above 70 foot-pounds by 3500 rpm and not crossing below until 8500 rpm, reaching a peak of nearly 80 foot-pounds just shy of 7000 rpm. Notice, also, the shape of that curve; save for a brief sag around 4500 rpm, it's flat and smooth and in places carries nearly 10 foot-pounds of advantage over the Suzuki. (To say nothing of cleaning the FZ1's clock in this measurement.) Glance at the horsepower chart. Again, there's that broad, progressive march up into the big numbers—to a peak of 112.8 horsepower at 8500 rpm, just 4.6 horses shy of the mighty FZ1's at 1000 fewer rpm. That's displacement for you.

To put it simply, this is a civilized brute of an engine. Smooth and exceedingly flexible, the ZRX's engine easily pulls tall gearing and manages just fine with five speeds in the revised transmission. Indeed, this engine has undergone more alterations from the ZRX11 than meet the eye. A 3mm bore increase combines with a 1.4mm-longer stroke to boost displacement to 1164cc, and, yet, Kawasaki did more than hog out the bores and fit a stroker crank. The cases, cylinder block (with electroplated bores), head and

Recalling more than reproducing the early GPz-style bikini fairing, the ZRX's deflector (left) parts the breeze effectively. Instruments right off your grandaddy's KZ1000 (below) are legible but a bit down-market in 2001. Tall gearing means big numbers on the left dial with small ones on the right.

So Where's Honda?

Think this concept—painted in early-'80s Team Honda silver-and-blue livery and packing trick chassis hardware and 120-plus rear-wheel horsepower—would sell? Doh!

JOHN KEOGH

IT'S A REASONABLE QUESTION: Where *is* Honda on this whole retro-/naked-bike thing? Ah, there's irony aplenty here, since Honda beat everyone to the punch way back in 1993 with its '94-spec CB1000F, a.k.a. "Big One."

But like a select list of Honda offerings (CB1, Transalp, Pacific Coast, etc.), the big CB—and it *was* big, weighing nearly 600 pounds wet!—was slightly ahead of its time. No one seemed to know what it was. The baby-boom "I gotta have something trick that looks old" thing hadn't quite hit yet, and the sportbike performance war raging at the time made the heavy and too-weak CB (it made only about 85 rear-wheel horsepower) look anemic in comparison.

Honda's CB1300SP—still only 100 hp

Honda's currently building a CB1300SP (left) for the Japanese market (though it's still hamstrung at 100 crankshaft horses), and rumors of a 929-engined Hornet-esque machine persist. But what *we'd* like to see is a retro-sport like the illustration above; a 120- or 130-horse rocket styled along the lines of a Freddie Spencer-era Superbike with wide wheels, tricky suspension and the silver-and-blue paint of those legendary Honda racers. Heck, have Freddie sign a hundred or so, sell 'em at a premium as special-editions, and blow another 2000 or 3000 standard versions out of the showroom doors like free beer. It could work.

—Mitch Boehm

naked bikes 2001

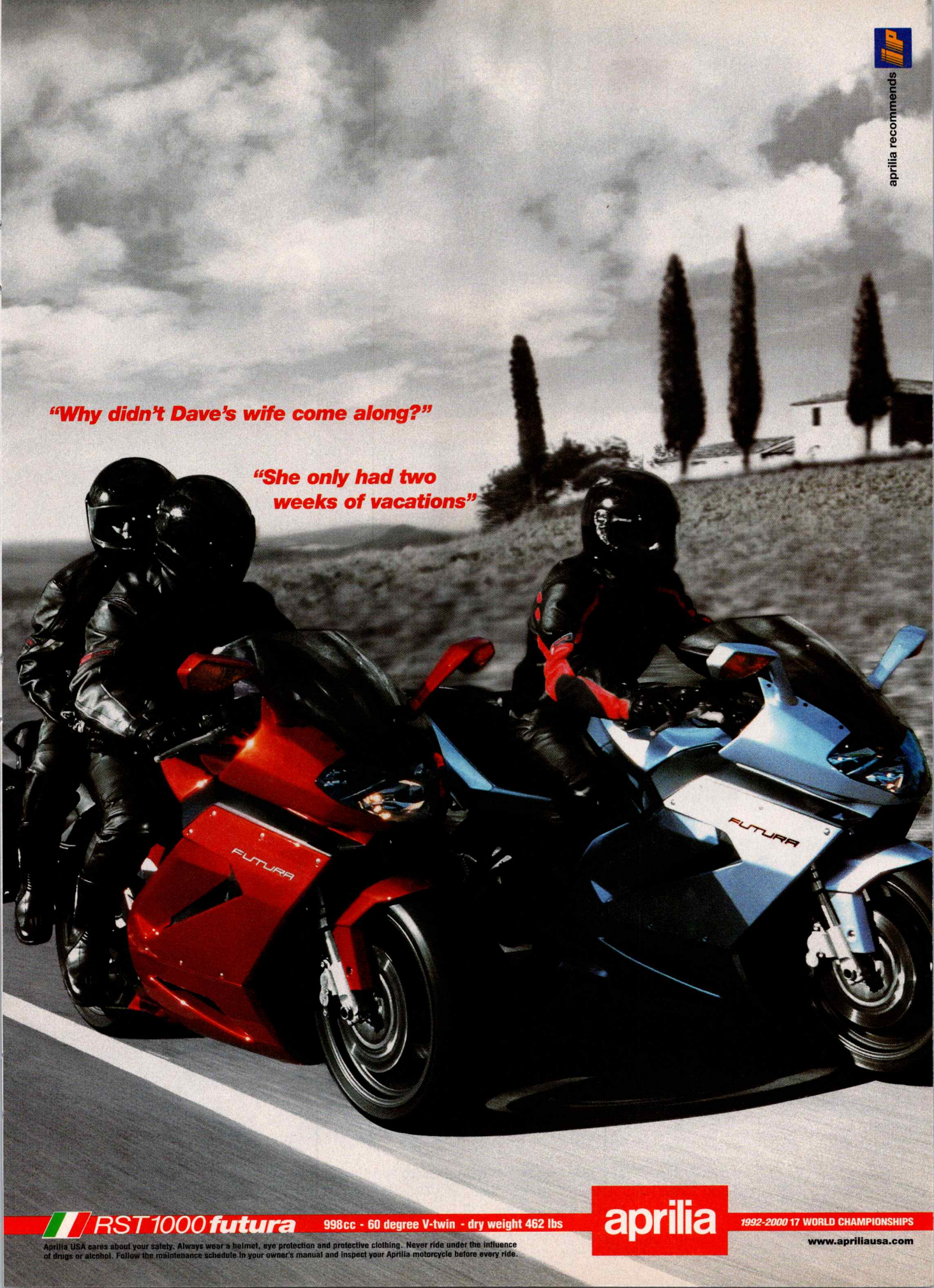
camshafts are all new and result in an engine that's just 5mm wider than before. (The change in cam design means you can no longer just toss in ZX-11 cams and boost the engine's top-end rush.) For a "mature" engine, this is a significant investment for Kawasaki and leads to renewed speculation that a ZRX-powered Concours replacement is on the way.

The ZRX breathes through a quartet of perfectly calibrated 36mm Keihins that include a throttle-position sensor to inform the ignition system of your intentions. New for '01 is a totally stainless exhaust system and a catalytic converter for California models; this marks the first time the ZRX will be sold in the fruit-and-nut (or no-energy) state. Elsewhere in the drivetrain are improvements to the transmission and clutch, though we can't say this is the best-shifting bike of the bunch. The occasional false neutral reminds you to shift with a deliberate boot.

Deliberate inputs are needed to make the bike hustle down a twisty road, too. Despite the most aggressive steering geometry—albeit not by much, because the ZRX's 25-degree rake is just 0.3 degrees sharper than the Bandit's but a full degree less than the FZ1's—and a middle-rank wheelbase, the ZRX feels a touch ponderous. Partial blame goes to the short, ergonomically superior superbike-style bar with the remaining responsibility sliding in the direction of the bike's highest-in-class 544-pound wet weight—30 pounds up on the FZ1 and 14 more pounds than the Suzuki. Yet the differences feel greater. Hop onto the ZRX and it feels small and dense, like your own personal block of depleted uranium.

Ride the ZRX like an old-style superbike—fluid lines, gentle rolling-in from the turn point, a minimum of midcorner corrections—and it'll make good time and seem to enjoy it.

Hop onto the ZRX and it feels small and dense, like your own personal block of depleted uranium.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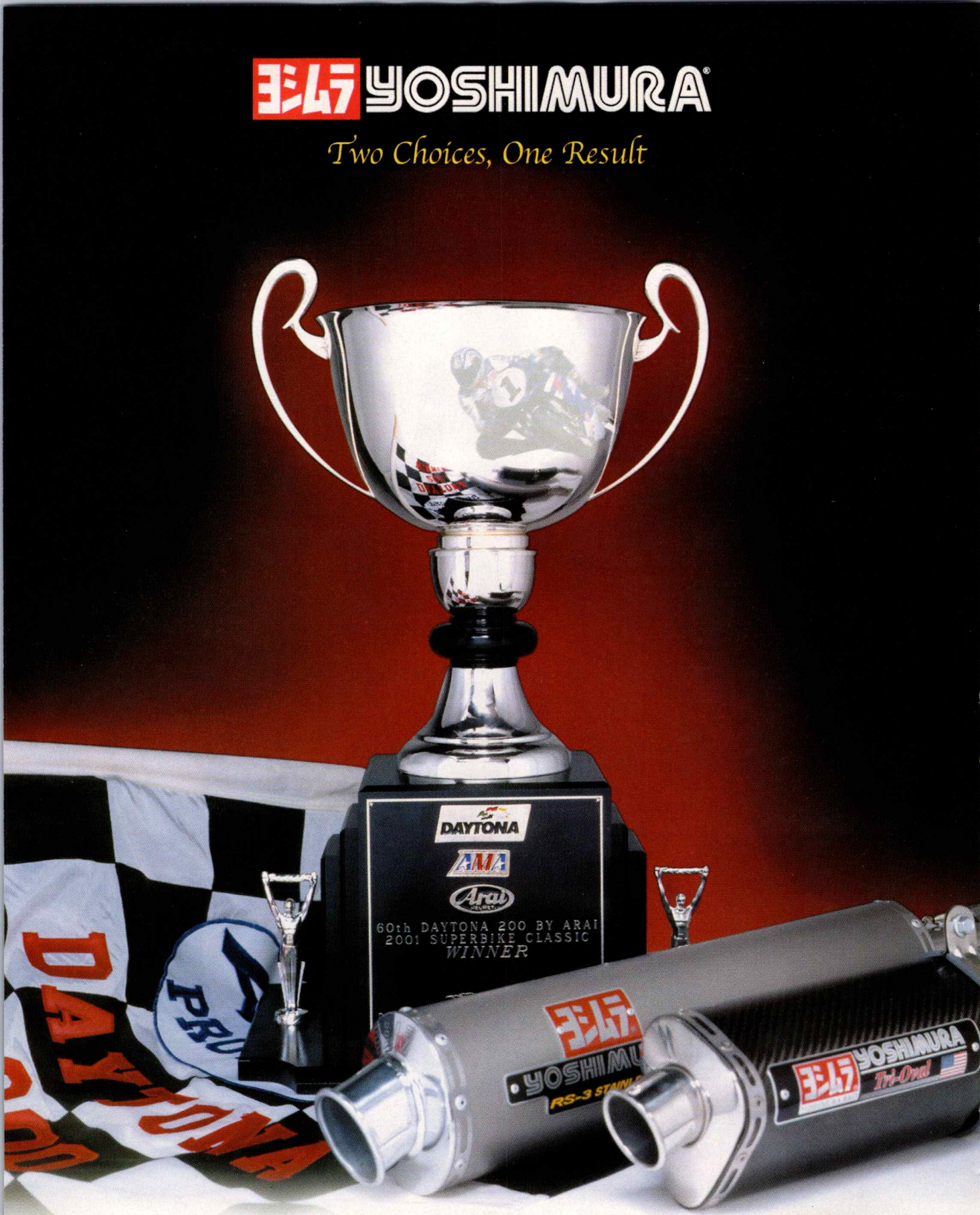

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Get Out Your GYT-R and Play

Yamaha's FZ1 has just hit the streets but already the factory has turned up with a series of accessories to be available from your friendly Yamaha dealer or at www.yamahausa.com. We've tried a few of 'em. (We haven't yet sampled the $399 leather seat or any of the many carbon-fiber bodywork and trim pieces.) Here's the skinny.

TITANIUM HANDLEBAR

Steel is old news; aluminum is passé; and carbon-fiber is just so yesterday—today's hot material is titanium. No surprise, then, to see Yamaha bring out a titanium drag-style bar for the FZ1. You've heard us complain lightly about the stock bike's riding position—the tubular bar rides atop towering mounts, which puts the grips way up there. Yamaha has two solutions, one being this bar. Compared with the stocker, the titanium bar has about 45mm less rise and a bit less pullback; that is, the ends of the grips are farther away from the rider for a flatter palm angle. It's also got no droop, unless you rotate the bar in the clamps to lower the grip ends.

Mounting the bar to the stock risers is a snap. Yamaha sells shorter throttle cables, but we found that careful rerouting of the bits made the change unnecessary. You will need to rotate the banjo fitting on the master cylinder a few degrees so it'll clear the upper triple clamp and have a new left handgrip at the ready because you'll have to cut off the glued-on stocker.

The result is a seating position that leans the rider further over the front wheel but not so far as to be uncomfortable. Not all of us liked the flatter profile and reduction in pullback, but we're in agreement that the resulting position is better than stock. Plus, the bar looks totally hot. (That's usually enough for us.) Suggested retail is $69.95.

BILLET HANDLEBAR MOUNTS

Not as trick but a better ergonomic solution, we think, are Yamaha's accessory low mounts. Constructed of black-painted billet, the risers are 23mm shorter than stock and bolt up easily. (Installation of the risers is far more straightforward than changing the bar because you don't need to disturb the controls or replace the handgrips.) Plan to spend a half hour making the swap.

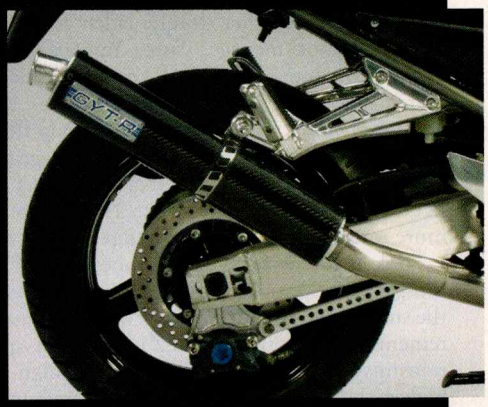
Once in place, the risers give the stock bar just the right height and place the rider in what we think is a superbly comfortable position. Suddenly there's more feedback from the front tire and fewer back pains from fighting the original sit-up-and-beg position. It may be our imagination working overtime, but we think the bars vibrate less with the shorter, stiffer risers in place. (They mount through the standard, pressed-in rubber grommets.) We think the FZ1 should come standard with these risers.

Complaints? Only that there's not quite enough space between the grips and the tank at full lock. Also, be advised that you can't use the low risers with the titanium bar; there's not enough clearance between the fork adjusters and the bottom of the bar. Suggested retail is $84.95.

GYT-R CARBON FIBER SLIP-ON

You knew that sooner or later someone would bang out an exhaust system for the FZ1. (And quite a few, we're sure, will do away with the torque-enhancing EXUP valve under the FZ1's belly.) For the moment, Yamaha has stolen some aftermarket thunder with its pair of slip-on mufflers. Labeled GYT-R, for Genuine Yamaha Technology-Racing, the pipes (one carbon, one aluminum) are supposed to add 4.5 horsepower through the midrange and, in the case of the carbon muffler, chop seven pounds off the bike.

We're used to inflated claims, so imagine our surprise when thrust upon the dyno the kitted FZ1 cranked out 122.9 horsepower at 9500 rpm, a boost of 5.5 hp at the peak, which puts the bike within 6.9 horses of the R1. As for torque, the GYT-R slip-on increased the max number by two foot-pounds to 72.9. But there's more to it than just the peaks. Except for a below-3000-rpm hole—a result, we think, of the already lean stock jetting being overcome by the pipe—the altered FZ1 is stronger by an average of 3.5 foot-pounds over stock. If that weren't enough, the slip-on fills in the upper-rev gap between the FZ1 and the R1. At 10,000 rpm, the kitted FZ1 is up by 6.5 horsepower, and at 11,750 rpm, the modded bike is nearly 18 hp stouter than the stock FZ1.



Our sound meter nabbed the muffler at 103 dB, a bit loud for our taste. The carbon slip-on sells for $414 while the aluminum version goes for $288.50.

naked 2001 bikes

Unfortunately, the Kawasaki resists being stuffed hard into corners and fights rapid transitions; the Suzuki and Yamaha commit these maneuvers without complaint. Toss in bumpy pavement and the Kawasaki further comes unglued. In fact, that was a recurring theme in the testers' comments: The ZRX may feel composed at a relaxed pace, but wick it up and the 1200 gets goosey very quickly. It's a good thing, then, that it lets you know of its displeasure by pitching on the medium-soft suspension and squirming on the excellent adhesion provided by the Bridgestone BT020 sport-touring radials. And though you can squeal that front tire, the ZRX's six-pot front calipers provide only middling power and lazy come-in compared with the FZ1's superlative, R1-spec stoppers.

Knock the pace back a bit and the ZRX's demeanor returns to the serene. For normal duties (highway use, urban commuting, sport-tour-pace back roads), the Kawasaki proves adept and confidence-inspiring. The suspension provides a good highway ride and enough adjustability to please light and large riders alike, and the ergonomic layout of the bike makes thoughts of touring rise to the surface quickly. That teeny fairing surrounding the headlight does a remarkably good job deflecting the atmosphere, providing a still-air pocket way out of proportion to its size.

Of course, that fairing is part of the whole Eddie-Lawson-replica theme deftly played by the lime-green paint (alas, it's a

metallic Jet Ski color, much more electric than the original ELR's), scooped seat and dual shocks working on the trick braced swingarm. If you're old enough to remember Lawson fighting the green giant, then the ZRX will push some pretty powerful emotional buttons. So much so that many of us here—while agreeing the ZRX is not the functional equal of the FZ1—would walk right past the Yamaha and actually go out and *buy* the ZRX1200R. It's the heart over the head, and there's nothing wrong with that.

Instruments nestle into the FZ1's diminutive half-fairing. The bar ends are a bit tall but that's easily remedied (see page 55). R1-based engine (left) is a screamer. The sculpted seat (below) is not the most comfortable of the lot but it's no brick, either.

YAMAHA FZ1

Yamaha is banking heavily on the reputation of the R1 to keep the FZ1 from seeming like some oddly styled (to some eyes) retro-rocket. It's a worthy tactic.

Sure enough, the R1-based engine is largely the star here, producing the best power of these three—albeit at the expense of low-end grunt. But here's the deal with that. The FZ1 has by far the most impressive and attention-getting top-end rip; a guided-missile thrust to the redline that the other, torque-laden fours here simply cannot manage. Sure, Yamaha's taken some of the bite out of the R1's tiny engine but there's still plenty to chew on. The bike's lesser heft—remember that 14 to 30 pounds difference?—together with shorter overall gearing adequately mask the fact that the other big nakeds are making from five to 10 foot-pounds more torque through the midrange.

Look at the performance numbers. The FZ1's top-gear 60-80 mph roll-on figure is so close to the stout ZRX's that it might as well be the same; remember, also, that the FZ1 has a six-speed transmission. And thanks to superior high-end power, the FZ1 blitzes the other nakeds in the quarter-mile by at least 0.13 seconds and nearly three mph. It's hard to find fault with the accelerative qualities of a 10.57-second motorcycle, no?

We should take a moment to debunk the tune-for-torque theory, however. Onto the donor R1 engine, Yamaha has fitted smaller carbs (37mm side-draft Mikunis compared with the 40mm downdrafts of the R1) and recast the cylinder head to re-angle the intake ports. These changes, along with a lower compression ratio, are intended to bolster midrange. But it didn't quite work that way. Comparing dyno charts from our FZ1 and the last R1 we tested proves the point. Both bikes produce nearly identical power up to 8500 rpm, at which point the R1 takes off, peaking later and higher, ending its top-end rush at nearly 130 horsepower and

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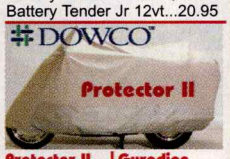

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MT90HB16.....$76.95
MT90HB16 SWS.....89.95
MT90HB16 WWW.....97.95
MH90H21.....68.95

D-205 (rear)
150/80ZR16.....$109.95
140/80ZR17.....104.95
150/70ZR17.....102.95
160/60ZR17.....105.95
160/70ZR17.....113.95
170/60ZR17.....107.95
180/55ZR17.....110.95
160/60ZR18.....103.95
(front)
110/80ZR17.....$86.95
120/60ZR17.....86.95
120/70ZR17.....87.95
110/80ZR18.....88.95
120/70ZR18.....91.95

All Dunlop tires available.

Continental

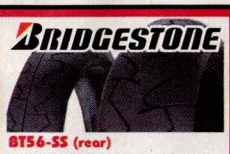
TK16/17 Touring
TK17 (rear)
150/90H15.....$66.95
130/90H16.....71.95
140/90H16.....72.95
150/80H16.....74.95
130/90H17.....72.95
120/90H18.....63.95
TK16 (front)
130/90H16.....$63.95
120/90H18.....68.95
100/90H19.....52.95
300x21.....55.95

Conti-Force (rear)
150/60ZR17.....$76.95
150/70ZR17.....76.95
160/60ZR17.....76.95
170/60ZR17.....78.95
180/55ZR17.....82.95
(front)
110/70ZR17.....$57.95
120/60ZR17.....63.95
120/70ZR17.....63.95

TKH23/24 Blitz (rear)
140/90H15.....$63.95
150/90H15.....81.95
120/90H16.....49.95
130/90H16.....53.95
140/90H16.....64.95
150/80H16.....71.95
130/90H17.....57.95
4.00H18.....56.95
120/90H18.....57.95
130/90H18.....58.95
(front)
110/90H18.....$51.95
90/90S19.....49.95
3.25H19.....49.95
110/90H19.....48.95

All Continental tires available.

BRIDGESTONE



BT56-SS (rear)
160/60ZR17.....$104.95
180/55ZR17.....111.95
190/50ZR17.....126.95
150/60ZR18.....107.95
(front)
130/70ZR16.....$81.95
110/70ZR17.....77.95
120/60ZR17.....81.95
120/70ZR17.....81.95

BT-010 (rear)
160/60ZR17.....$98.95
170/60ZR17.....101.95
180/55ZR17.....105.95
190/50ZR17.....122.95
190/50ZR17 G.....123.95
200/50ZR17.....125.95
150/60ZR18.....98.95
(front)
130/70ZR16.....$79.95
110/70ZR17.....79.95
120/60ZR17.....79.95
120/65ZR17.....81.95
120/70ZR17.....82.95
120/70ZR17 G.....82.95

BT-020 (rear)
150/70ZR17.....$101.95
160/60ZR17.....98.95
160/70ZR17.....105.95
170/60ZR17.....101.95
180/55ZR17.....105.95
160/60ZR18.....105.95
(front)
120/60ZR17.....$79.95
120/70ZR17.....82.95
110/80ZR18.....81.95
120/70ZR18.....86.95

S-11 (rear)
140/90H15 RWL.....$74.95
150/90H15 RWL.....79.95
130/90H16.....65.95
130/90H16 RWL.....71.95
140/90H16 RWL.....79.95
130/90H17.....66.95
110/90H18.....57.95
120/90H18.....59.95
130/90H18.....67.95
130/90H18 RWL.....73.95
(front)
130/90H16.....$76.95
100/90H18.....50.95
110/90H18.....49.95
110/90H18 RWL.....54.95
120/90H18 RWL.....57.95
90/90H19.....50.95
100/90H19.....54.95
100/90H19 RWL.....57.95
110/90H19.....55.95
110/90H19 RWL.....61.95

All Bridgestone tires available.

AVON TYRES

Venom X (rear)
140/90H15.....$81.95
150/90H15.....107.95
150/90V15.....88.95
170/80H15.....91.95
MT90H16.....82.95
MT90H16 SWS.....91.95
MT90H16 WWW.....92.95
140/90H16.....88.95
140/90H16 WWW.....97.95
150/80H16.....93.95
160/80H16.....115.95
(front)
MT90H16.....$78.95
MT90H16 SWS.....83.95
MT90H16 WWW.....85.95
150/80H16.....88.95
100/90H18.....69.95
120/90H18.....74.95
130/70H18.....88.95
100/90H19.....60.95
100/90H19 WWW.....74.95
110/90H19.....63.95
80/90H21.....63.95
MH90H21.....64.95
MH90H21 WWW.....88.95

AV35/36 Azaro II (rear)
140/80ZRX17.....$103.95
150/70ZRX17.....109.95
160/60ZR17.....113.95
170/60ZR17.....114.95
180/55ZR17.....123.95
160/60ZR18.....111.95
(front)
120/60ZR17.....$88.95
120/70ZR17.....88.95

All Avon tires available.

PIRELLI

MTR22/21 Dragon EVO (rear)
150/60ZR17.....$129.95
160/60ZR17.....134.95
170/60ZR17.....136.95
180/55ZR17.....139.95
190/50ZR17.....161.95
(front)
130/70ZR16.....$106.95
110/70ZR17.....99.95
120/60ZR17.....106.95
120/70ZR17.....106.95

MTR22/21 Dragon EVO Corsa (rear)
150/60ZR17.....$129.95
160/60ZR17.....134.95
170/60ZR17 SC2.....136.95
180/55ZR17.....139.95
180/55ZR17 SC2.....139.95
190/50ZR17.....161.95
(front)
130/70ZR16.....$139.95
110/70ZR17.....134.95
120/60ZR17.....139.95
120/65ZR17.....144.95
120/70ZR17.....139.95
120/70ZR17.....139.95

MTR24/23 Dragon GTS (rear)
150/70ZR17.....$126.95
160/60ZR17.....129.95
160/70ZR17.....132.95
170/60ZR17.....133.95
180/55ZR17.....135.95
190/50ZR17.....157.95
160/60ZR18.....136.95
(front)
120/60ZR17.....$103.95
120/70ZR17.....103.95
120/70ZR18.....101.95
110/80ZR18.....101.95

MRS Supercorsa (rear)
150/60ZR17.....$134.95
160/60ZR17.....138.95
180/55ZR17.....150.95
190/50ZR17.....158.95
(front)
110/70ZR17.....$116.95
120/60ZR17.....121.95
120/70ZR17.....121.95

MRS Supercorsa Race (rear)
150/60ZR17.....$139.95
160/60ZR17.....144.95
170/60ZR17.....153.95
180/55ZR17.....156.95
(front)
110/70ZR17.....$122.95
120/70ZR17.....126.95

All Pirelli tires available.

METZELER

ME23 (rear)
150/60ZR17.....$125.95
160/60ZR17.....127.95
170/60ZR17.....130.95
180/55ZR17.....132.95
190/50ZR17.....144.95
(front)
130/70ZR16.....$102.95
110/70ZR17.....95.95
120/60ZR17.....102.95
120/70ZR17.....102.95

ME55 Metronic (rear)
130/90V16.....$111.95
150/80VB16.....134.95
140/80VB17.....124.95
160/70VB17.....139.95

All Metzeler tires available.

METZELER

ME33 Lazer (front)
120/80V16.....$96.95
120/70V17.....85.95
90/90H18.....74.95
100/90V18.....88.95
110/80V18.....88.95
110/90V18.....96.95
3.25H19.....89.95
3.25V19.....77.95
3.50H19.....85.95
100/90V19.....93.95
110/90V19.....93.95
80/90H21.....85.95
90/90H21.....94.95

Renn Sport (rear)
150/60ZR17.....$131.95
160/60ZR17.....135.95
180/55ZR17.....147.95
190/50ZR17.....155.95
(front)
110/70ZR17.....$114.95
120/60ZR17.....119.95
120/70ZR17.....119.95

Renn Race (rear)
150/60ZR17.....$163.95
160/60ZR17.....168.95
180/55ZR17.....183.95
(front)
110/70ZR17.....$142.95
120/70ZR17.....148.95

ME880 (rear)
140/80HB15.....$106.95
140/90HB15.....101.95
150/90HB15.....112.95
170/80HB15.....118.95
180/70HB15.....118.95
130/90HB16.....96.95
140/90HB16.....106.95
150/80HB16.....119.95
200/60VR16.....132.95
240/50VR16.....157.95
160/70VR17.....107.95
160/70VB17.....107.95
240/40VR18.....178.95
(front)
130/90HB16.....$83.95
150/80HB16.....93.95
120/70VB17.....85.95
120/70VR17.....85.95
110/90H18.....99.95
120/90H18.....87.95
130/60VR18.....119.95
100/90H19.....75.95
110/90H19.....79.95
80/90H21.....73.95
120/70V21.....89.95

ME99 Perfect (rear)
130/90V16.....$106.95
140/90V16.....116.95
150/80V16.....126.95
130/90V17.....107.95
4.00V18.....92.95
120/90V18.....102.95
130/80V18.....108.95

ME Z4 (rear)
150/70ZR17.....$121.95
160/60ZR17.....123.95
160/70ZR17.....126.95
170/60ZR17.....126.95
180/55ZR17A.....129.95
190/50ZR17.....150.95
160/60ZR18.....130.95
(front)
120/60ZR17.....$99.95
120/70ZR17.....99.95
120/70ZR17B.....99.95
110/80ZR18.....96.95
120/70ZR18.....96.95

All Metzeler tires available.

IRC TIRE

CHENG SHIN

Call for Tires not listed.

Details, Details

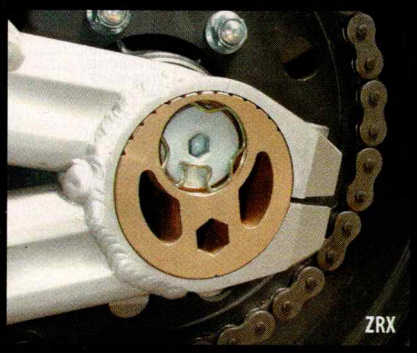
If the devil is in the details, then these bikes are practically swimming in Satan's sweat. Aimed at more discerning riders (that's marketing speak for older, finicky), these naked bikes get most of the details right.

MAINTENANCE ACCESSIBILITY

KAWASAKI: Reasonably snug fit into frame but shim-under-bucket valve adjustment doesn't need checking until 12,000 miles. Cartridge-type oil filter is messy. **SUZUKI:** Tight in places. Screw-and-locknut valve adjustment happens more often but is within the realm of the weekend wrench. **YAMAHA:** Small engine in a big frame but lots of snakes atop the cambox. Shim-under-bucket system doesn't need its first check until 26,600 miles!

CHAIN MAINTENANCE

KAWASAKI: Eccentric adjusters maintain alignment—assuming it was right from the factory. Lack of centerstand complicates lubrication. Swingarm has bosses for paddock-stand buttons. **SUZUKI:** and **YAMAHA:** Centerstands and robust adjusters make life easy. Keep cotter pins handy for the Bandit.



INSTRUMENTATION

KAWASAKI: Just the basics plus a fuel gauge. Somehow a single mechanical tripmeter seems low-budget. No temperature gauge. **SUZUKI:** Clear and concise. The digital-block fuel gauge doesn't offer much resolution but it's accurate near the bottom of the scale. Dual tripmeters. **YAMAHA:** Lots of gadgets, mostly done right. Always-on clock is a nice treat but 20-mph increments on speedo numerals make the gauge hard to interpret at a glance. Also, no temp gauge. Fuel gauge includes low-fuel warning light. Very nice.

MIRRORS

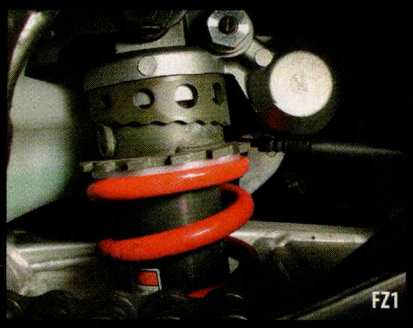
KAWASAKI: A bit narrow but almost always clear; they still provide a decent field of view. **SUZUKI:** Look cheap but work well. Clear at most vehicle speeds, but fuzzy in the engine's vibe zone. **YAMAHA:** Fairing-mounted mirrors are often fuzzy at highway (and supra-legal) speeds. Reasonable field of view given how far they are from the rider.

STORAGE

KAWASAKI: Cavernous. Big underseat compartment where a single shock would be, plus a large container in the tailsection. Who needs saddlebags? **SUZUKI:** Modest underseat storage. **YAMAHA:** Tightly packed but still room for a flat kit and a few tools. Integrated U-lock compartment in the underside of the seat is a nice touch.

SUSPENSION SETUP

KAWASAKI: A total breeze. Dual shocks put all the adjustments out in the open. **SUZUKI:** Ramped rear preload adjuster is way up under the side panels. **YAMAHA:** Ramped preload adjuster is quite accessible and the tool in the kit even works. Everything else is peachy, though the fork preload and rebound adjusters are crowded by a lower bar or shorter risers.



FUEL PETCOCKS

KAWASAKI: Yes, indeed, plus the gauge. **SUZUKI:** Also, a yes plus gauge and low-level icon. **YAMAHA:** Nope, but a gauge and a light.

Cheers & Jeers

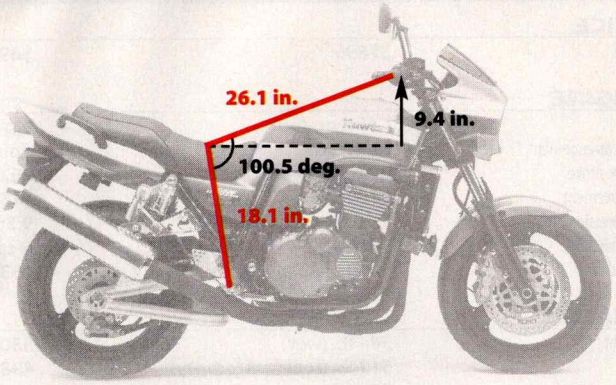
	KAWASAKI	SUZUKI	YAMAHA	VERDICT
Engine	10	8	10	*High-end wail distinguishes the FZ1's mill but it's the ZRX that carries away the top-'o-torque honors*
Drivetrain	8	9	9	*Suzuki shifts like, well, a Suzuki while the Kawasaki hides a few false neutrals; the FZ1 shifts (a little) better than the R1*
Handling	7	8	9	*FZ1 is an apex missile in spite of slightly remote steering feel; Suzuki steers the best and the ZRX is undone by weight*
Braking	7	7	10	*Bandit and ZRX have similar, medium-powerful brakes but the FZ1's are R1-good—and that's saying a lot*
Ride	8	8	8	*No clear winners. The FZ1 is liveliest and the Kawasaki's the hardest-pressed when you're making time*
Ergonomics	10	9	8	*Suzuki's ergos are in the middle of the too-high-bar FZ1 and compact (and staff favorite) ZRX; Bandit could use a screen*
Features	8	7	9	*All are pretty good given the price points, but Yamaha's higher-tech engine sways the vote*
Refinement	8	7	10	*Not much to quibble about with the FZ1, while the Suzuki's price-point suspension and buzzy engine detract*
Value	8	10	8	*Seven-grand Bandit steals the category and leaves you plenty of money to improve the suspension*
Fun Factor	9	9	9	*If you can't have fun on any of these, check your pulse. Preference of high-rpm wail or mid-rev grunt may swing your vote*
Overall*	8	8	9	*Yamaha has the right formula but you have to like the looks. On emotion, the ZRX scores massively*

*Overall rating is independent and not derived from category scores.

Ergos Explained

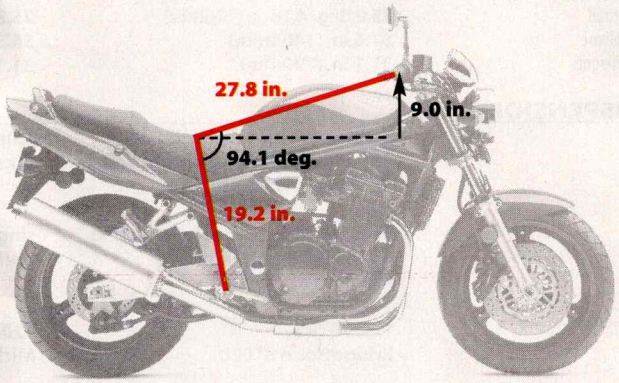
KAWASAKI ZRX1200R

Most of us agree that the Kawasaki's seating position is just about perfect. It feels (and is) short, from the saddle to the bars, and has substantially high and rearset footpegs. (That seat-to-peg number is more like a 600cc sportbike than a semistandard.) You end up with the classic superbike-racer slouch from the 1970s and '80s, and it still works marvelously. Some of our testers found the scooped seat, which offers up about an inch less legroom than the other bikes, to be a bit too dished. Overall, though, the compact seating position helps to minimize the bike's mass and create a comfortable, but not confining, work space.



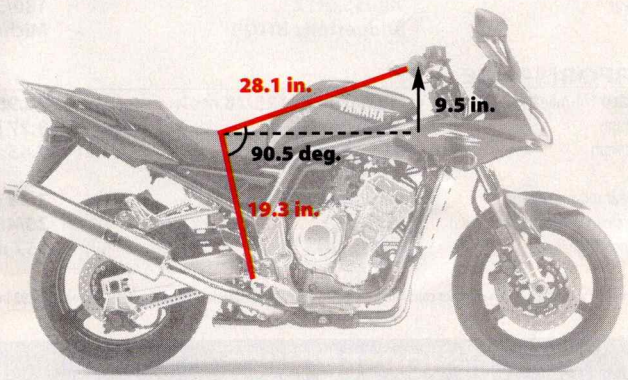
SUZUKI BANDIT 1200

Right in the middle of the pack, with the shortest handlebar rise here. (Still, at nine inches, that's almost double what even the most street-oriented sportbikes have.) With a modest reach to the bar and decent legroom, the Bandit provides a very standardesque ergonomic profile, good for a variety of uses. We have to point out, though, that this configuration works better with a fairing, as on the Bandit 1200S. Still, a solid effort.



YAMAHA FZ1

The schizoid of the bunch. Comparable legroom to the Suzuki, which is to say it's got lots, but with a significantly taller bar. In fact, the Yamaha's tubular handlebar places the rider's hands in an awkwardly high position relative to the rest of the bike. What's more, the wedge in the seat next to the tank forces the rider back a bit, increasing the effective reach to the bar. The 28.1-inch distance is the longest in this bunch. That tall bar and rearset seating position combined with the slightly forward-set footpegs explain the FZ1's narrower included seating angle. It's a much happier proposition with the GYT-R lower handlebar mounts in place (see sidebar, page 55), though we'd also like to see higher and more rearset pegs.



naked 2001 bikes

maximum adrenaline flow for the rider. Yamaha says it couldn't package enough fuel for a good semitourer with the R1's downdraft induction system in the FZ1, but many of us would give up some range to reclaim the R1's full power.

Well, we would go on about this if the FZ1's engine weren't a pleasure to live with. Thanks to rubber mounts, the FZ1's rider receives very little vibration, just an occasional buzz in the bar ends and the odd fuzzing of the rearview-mirror images. Save for off-idle leanness (and the concomitant abruptness), the FZ1's mill gets down to business without fuss or bother. The revised shift linkage jams the six-speed box through the gears accurately, better, even, than the last R1 we had through here. And we have to admit that the FZ1's gearing is spot on for the application, making highway duty easy and keeping the engine on the boil for back-road bashing no trouble at all.

That the FZ1 manages highway cruising and canyon strafing with equal composure is largely what puts it at the top of the comparison. Tightly controlled suspension—though still softly sprung by pure-sportbike standards—helps keep the FZ1 on an even keel and allows you to use up all the cornering clearance without the thought you might be approaching its limits anywhere near the front of your mind. In fact, you can work up to a pace that gets both footpeg feelers tossing sparks—independently, that is; if you're sparking both at the same time, you've probably crashed—and the bike is still dead stable and totally predictable.

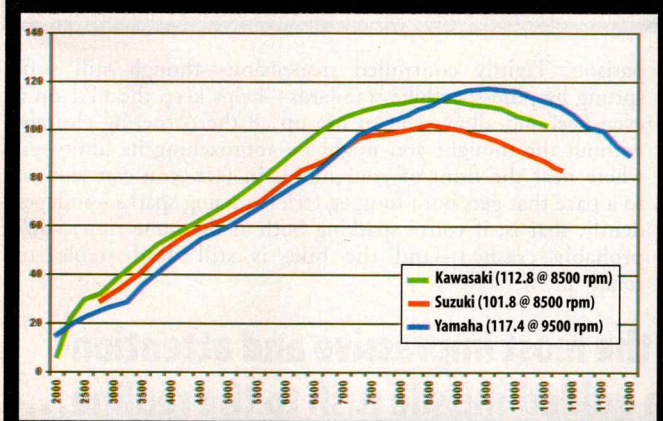
The FZ1 has by far the most impressive and attention-getting top-end rip; a guided-missile rush to the redline....

And while we don't think the Yamaha's steering is quite as direct and communicative as the Suzuki's—there's the slightest dead spot right at vertical—it's well down the straight from the Kawasaki's. Factor in the FZ1's clearly superior R1-sourced brakes—the front's terrific, the rear a bit too powerful, but it's a small gripe—and you can see how the Yamaha puts all the pieces together for a better-rounded package.

	KAWASAKI ZRX1200R	SUZUKI BANDIT 1200	YAMAHA FZ1
PRICE			
MSRP	$7899	$6999	$8499
ENGINE			
Type	l-c inline-four	a/o-c inline-four	l-c inline-four
Valve arrangement	dohc, 16v	dohc, 16v	dohc, 20v
Bore x stroke	79.0 x 59.4mm	79.0 x 59.0mm	74.0 x 58.0mm
Displacement	1164cc	1157cc	998cc
Compression ratio	10.0:1	9.5:1	11.4:1
Transmission	5-speed	5-speed	6-speed
Final drive	#530 chain	#530 chain	#530 chain
CHASSIS			
Weight	544 lb. (wet) 512 lb. (fuel tank empty)	530 lb. (wet) 498 lb. (fuel tank empty)	514 lb. (wet) 480 lb. (fuel tank empty)
Fuel capacity	5.3 gal.	5.3 gal.	5.6 gal.
Rake/trail	25.0 deg./4.18 in. (106mm)	25.3 deg./4.1 in. (104mm)	26.0 deg./4.1 in. (104mm)
Wheelbase	57.6 in. (1463mm)	56.3 in. (1430mm)	57.0 in. (1448mm)
Seat height	31.1 in. (790mm)	31.1 in. (790mm)	32.3 in. (820mm)
SUSPENSION			
Front	43mm cartridge fork adjustable for spring preload, compression and rebound damping	43mm cartridge fork adjustable for spring preload	43mm cartridge fork adjustable for spring preload, compression and rebound damping
Rear	twin shocks adjustable for spring preload, compression and rebound damping	single shock adjustable for spring preload and rebound damping	single shock adjustable for spring preload, compression and rebound damping
Tire, front	120/70ZR17 Bridgestone BT020	120/70ZR17 Michelin Macadam 90X	120/70ZR17 Bridgestone BT020
Tire, rear	180/55ZR17 Bridgestone BT020	180/55ZR17 Michelin Macadam 90X	180/55ZR17 Bridgestone BT020
PERFORMANCE			
Corrected 1/4-mile*	10.70 sec. @ 125.78 mph	10.98 sec. @ 121.91 mph	10.57 sec. @ 128.76 mph
0-60 mph	3.15 sec.	3.27 sec.	3.04 sec.
0-100 mph	6.95 sec.	7.65 sec.	6.67 sec.
Top-gear roll-on, 60-80 mph	3.20 sec.	3.38 sec.	3.26 sec.
Fuel mileage (low/high/average)	31/50/39	30/46/37	32/47/38
Cruising range (exc. reserve)	165 miles	157 miles	170 miles

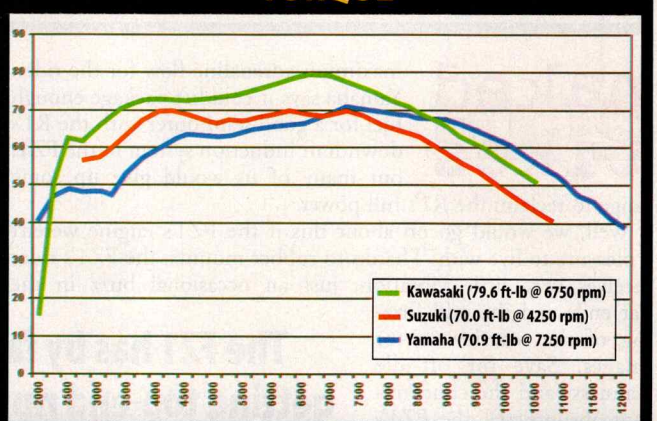
*Performance with test-session weather conditions corrected to sea-level standard conditions (59 degrees F, 29.92 in. of mercury)

HORSEPOWER

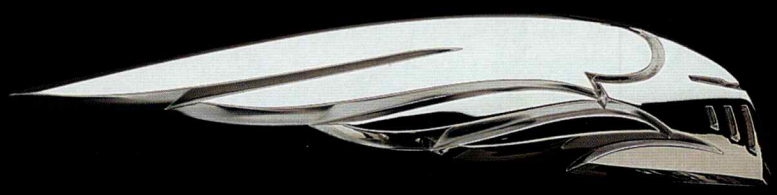


DYNO CHAT: The Yamaha's R1 heritage shows through the dyno chart, with an impressive top-end surge that hits later and harder. Kawasaki has dramatically raised the ZRX's game in the bump to a 1200; this used to be a 100-horse engine. Suzuki's older-tech engine compensates with greater low-rpm power by a useful margin but feels, as the graph only suggests, quite a bit less energetic on top. Revving beyond 8000 rpm is optional.

TORQUE



Displacement does great things for torque output, but the Kawasaki takes the greatest advantage here. The curve is fairly flat for the ZRX, which is just how it feels from the saddle, like a massive flywheel thrusting you forward. Notice how both the torquemeisters "lay down" at high rpm? Blame conservative tuning techniques. The FZ1's trace is just like an R1's until 8500 rpm, where it starts to lose steam. Anybody got a set of 40mm sidedrafts?



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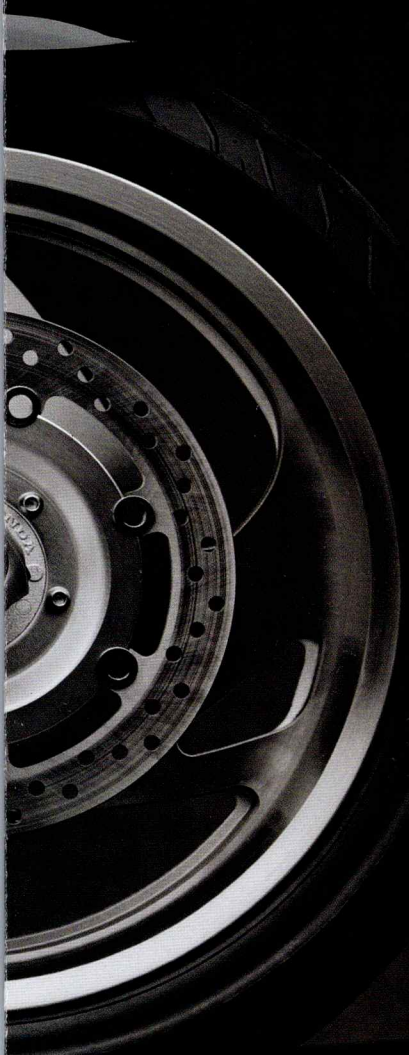
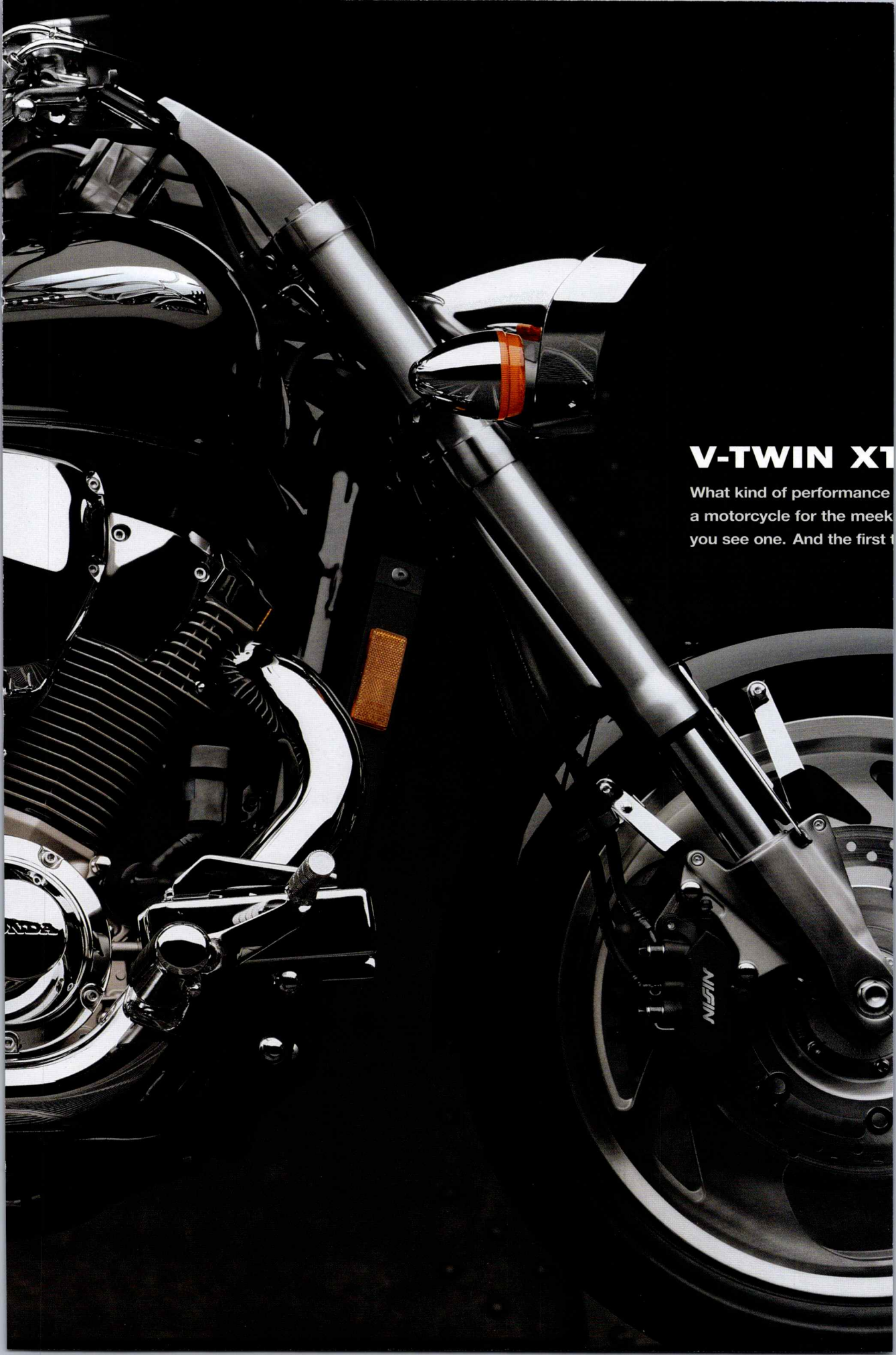
can you expect from Honda's incredible new 1800 VTX™? Let's just say this isn't . In fact, its sense of style isn't for the meek, either. You'll know that the first time ime you ride a VTX, you'll understand what it's all about. PERFORMANCE FIRST.™

HONDA

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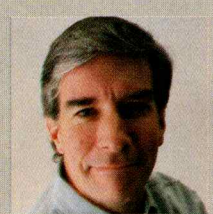
Off the Record

norem
Age: 27
Height: 5 ft. 9 in.
Weight: 140 lb.
Inseam: 30 in.
Favorite thing to do naked: Take a sh…ower

As a young boy I loved to run around naked, so it's no surprise each of these bikes speaks to my inner child in a very satisfying way. Who says you have to ride a sportbike to have mondo acceleration? These bikes are all rippling with muscle, and they flex it in style, too—comfortable wheelie machines, if you will. The best of the bunch? That's easy: the Bandit. It lies just behind the other bikes in comfort due to its lack of a windscreen, but puts them all on the trailer when the road gets twisty. Its steering is light and neutral, the tall bar lets you toss the bike side to side with ease, and its midrange stomp is flexible without being intimidating. The courts won't let me run around naked anymore, but riding the Bandit is the next best thing. *—Josh Norem*



smith
Age: 49
Height: 5 ft. 10 in.
Weight: 185 lb.
Inseam: 31 in.
Favorite thing to do naked: Drive someone else's car

The essence of these bikes—and their real brilliance—lies in their lack of specialization, their freedom from the penalties of perfection. A great sportbike has no choice but to have way-low clip-ons. A grand cruiser needs to put your feet way out front. And they both pay major prices for that specialization, delightful as it is, winding up one-trick ponies. Why can't I have a natural, day-long posture, with balanced distribution of weight among my various contact points, plus enough immediacy of control to make a back road fun? Well, I can.

The Bandit, FZ-1, and ZRX are motorcycles, in the traditional sense (at least, according to my personal tradition), and you sit on them the way motorcycles were meant to be sat upon. Furthermore, their performance, refinement and technical sophistication are good enough in modern terms to make them really good motorcycles, and that means the riding positions (especially the Bandit's, for me) really can start you rethinking this whole extreme-specialization thing. Factory racer-reps? "Custom" cruisers? Just passing fads, I say! *—Kevin Smith*

burns
Age: 41
Height: 5 ft. 7 in.
Weight: 150 lb.
Inseam: 30 in.
Favorite thing to do naked: Mow the lawn

Oooh, tough call, and I hate to repeat myself but I could be happy with any of these three scooters. The FZ1, strangely enough, leaves me mostly ambivalent. It's a little white-breadish. The Bandit's very nice and if money's tight it's your man, but the Kawasaki is the one I want. That twin-shock rear end doesn't offer quite the rear-wheel control of the others, but it looks hot and a briskish spin shows it's close enough for more aggressive use than you might think. The motor is definitely ready. The whole bike overall feels smaller and tighter than the others, even though it's actually not. (The other two are better for traveling.) Probably, it's the look of the thing that fires my crusty synapses, though; it makes the others look sort of stodgy. Is the Kawasaki good enough to displace the Triumph Speed Triple as winner of the swimsuit competition? I think not. If money is no object, I still covet the bug-eyed triple. *—John Burns*

boehm
Age: 38
Height: 6 ft.
Weight: 225 lb.
Inseam: 32 in.
Favorite thing to do naked: Surf (not the Web)

I can't help feeling a sense of having come full circle when I ride these things. Sure, they look and sound like those famous UJMs (Universal Japanese Motorcycles, for those arriving late to the game) from my—and probably your—streetbiking youth, but they couldn't be more functionally different. They're more powerful, lighter, handle much better and incorporate trick hardware you never saw on GSs and CB-Fs unless you were at an AMA National watching Cooley or Spencer. And where did all this all-around competency come from? From today's (and the last decade's) hard-core sportbikes. See, to get here—FZ1s, ZRX1200Rs and Bandits—we had to go there: YZF-R1s, ZX-9Rs and GSX-Rs. So the next time any of you antisportbike, prostandard/naked-bike guys—who spout endlessly about the folly of riding around on "racebikes with lights," and give us endless crap about covering them—jump off your new brand-new, late-model naked bike with a huge grin on your face, thank a sportbike. Me? I like the Kawasaki best. But I'd take any of these three in a heartbeat. *—Mitch Boehm*

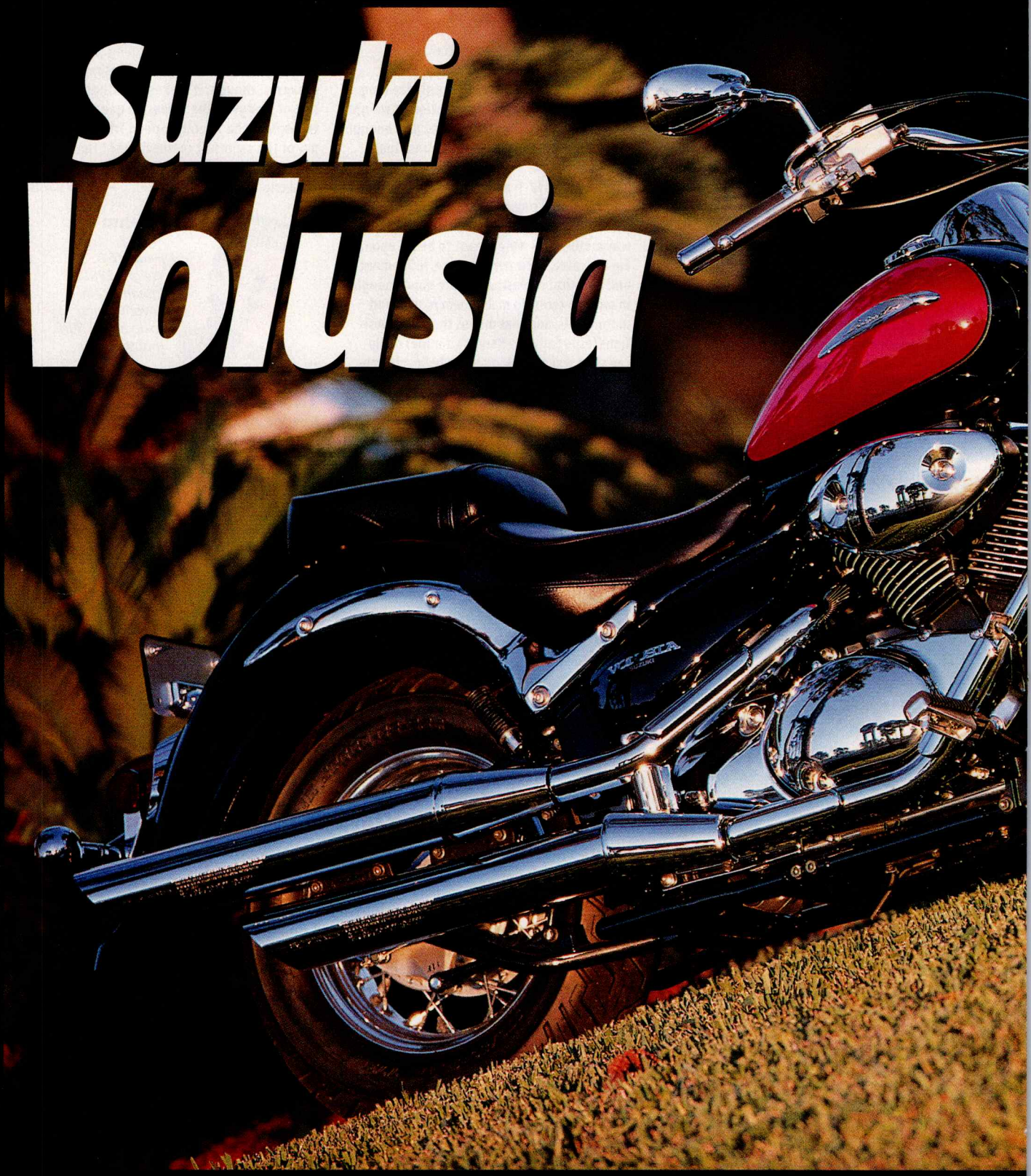
naked 2001 bikes

You could almost predict this result, because the FZ1's chassis is the newest design of these three, uses a smaller, lighter engine that is more easily packaged for ideal weight distribution, and is priced so that the suspension can be of better quality without causing the accountants to jump off the roof. And while the engine may look just a bit odd to the traditionalist expecting a big air-cooled inline-four hung in that double-cradle steel frame there's no denying the cachet the R1-based engine brings to the FZ1.

Reflected glory goes only so far in the daily grind, but Yamaha has seen to the details to ensure the love affair continues. There's a centerstand (a yes in this category for the Suzuki and a no for the Kawasaki) and full instruments, including fuel gauge and clock. The frame-mount fairing really parts the wind (even compared with Suzuki's half-faired 1200S, the FZ1's deflectional abilities are noteworthy) and those cat-eye headlights spread a lot of lumens.

You would expect the most expensive bike of these three to have the better pieces, and in the FZ1 the premise is fulfilled. More than that, we're happy to applaud Yamaha for forking out on its own path, refusing to make an FZ750 copy or a modern FJ1200 (though it's with the favorite FJ that the FZ1 shares a lot of spiritual connection), and, instead, drawing from the performance credentials of the R1 and doing the whole naked-/performance-bike thing right. Pardon us as we sit back, wring our hands and hope Yamaha sells a bunch of these things to prove that the time really has come for a rational, full-performance motorcycle. MC

Suzuki Volusia



RIDING AROUND DAYTONA ON SUZUKI'S NEW VL800 Volusia for a week with the other cruiser guys and gals, combined with watching people crash themselves silly at the Speedway, finally opened our eyes to the error of our sportbike ways. Why would anybody want to crouch over one of those grisly little plastic things when they could resplendently recline, from Boot Hill Saloon to Froggy's and back, upon a luxuriously appointed steed, hearkening back to the classic motorcycles of the 1940s and '50s? Ever try to hearken on a crotch rocket? Almost impossible.

FIRST RIDE

The Japanese are a crafty and patient people. Remember when their cars sucked? Their cruiser bikes are no longer dissed by the Daytona in-crowd either (many of whom wouldn't know a Panhead from a skillet-tail anyway), and they represent big dollars for the Japanese manufacturers.

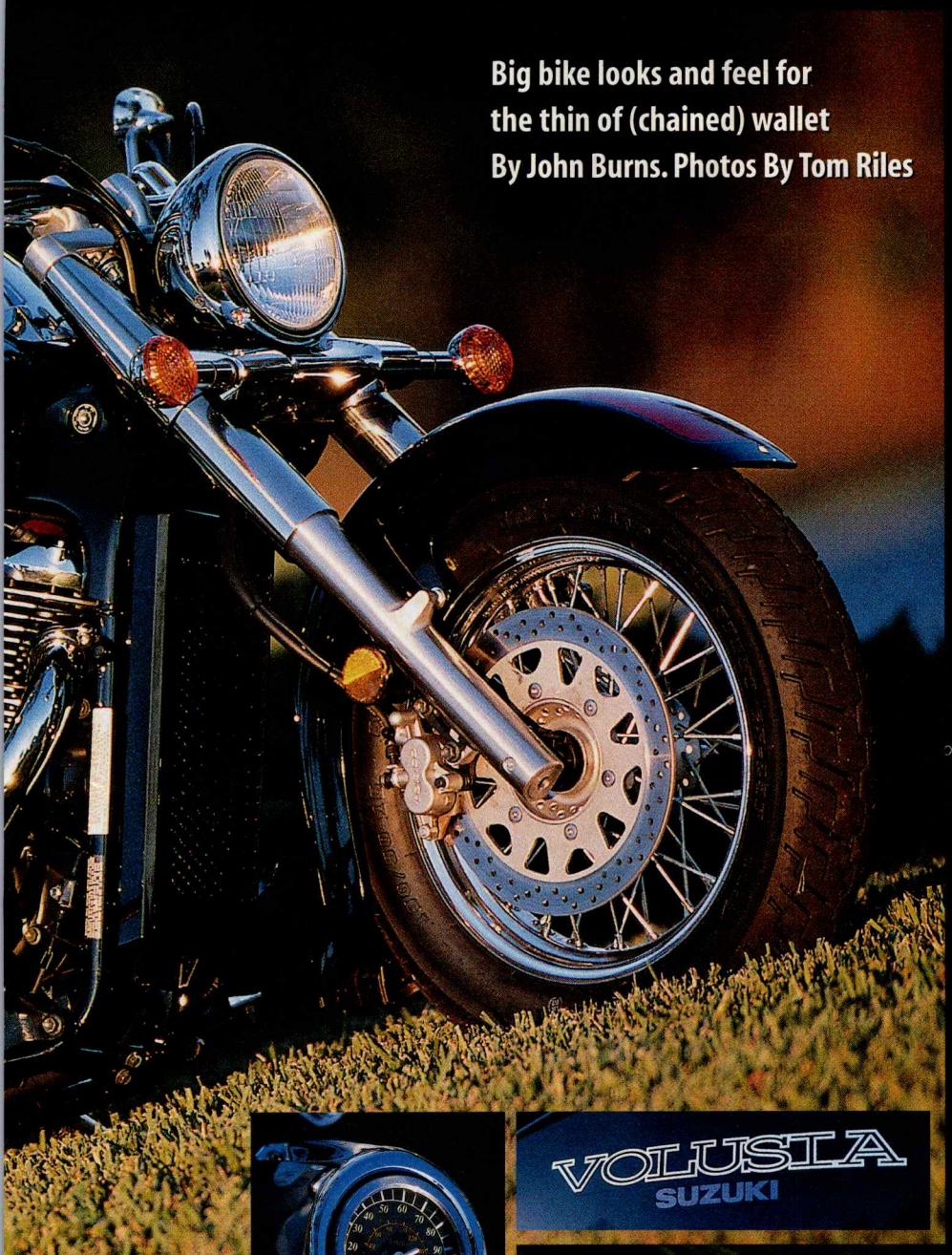
Feast your orbs, then, upon the new, $6599 Volusia. It's a pretty good piece, too. Suzuki retuned its revvy old 805cc 45-degree V-twin for more low-rpm power, gave it a throttle-position sensor and a bit more flywheel weight (bigger

Big bike looks and feel for the thin of (chained) wallet

By John Burns. Photos By Tom Riles

Suzuki VL800

PRICE	
MSRP	$6599
ENGINE	
Type	l-c 45-degree V-twin
Valve arrangement	sohc, 8v
Displacement	805cc
Transmission	5-speed
CHASSIS	
Weight	526 lb. (claimed dry)
Fuel capacity	4.5 gal.
Wheelbase	65.2 in. (1656mm)
Seat height	27.6 in. (701mm)



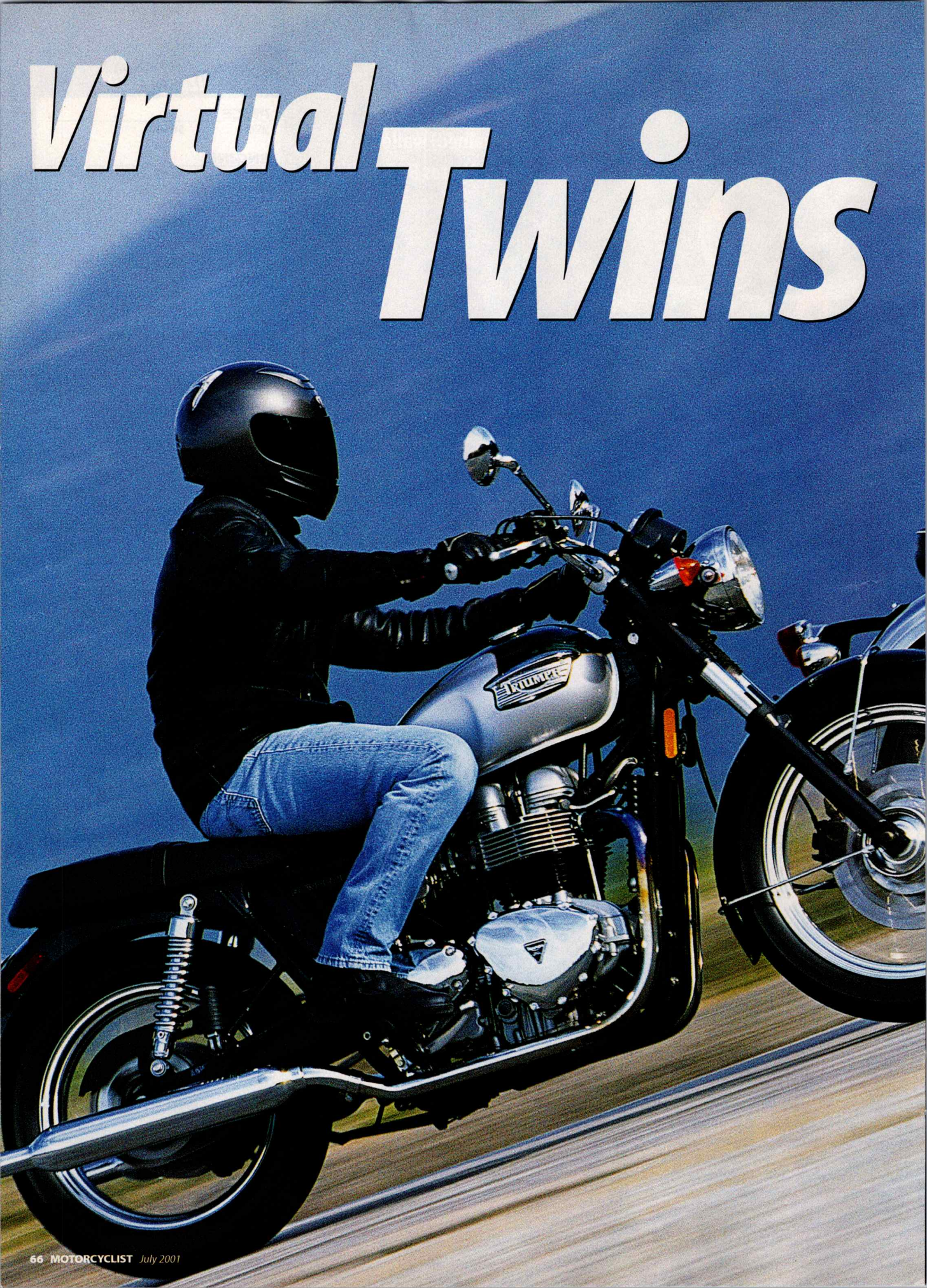
generator rotor); the Volusia pulls smooth and clean from right off idle. Being a Suzuki, shifting is also highly precise, the clutch action is light, and so rumbling back and forth on the boulevard is refreshingly nonmasochistic. Suzuki figured out how to get a pretty satisfying rumble from the bike's twin double-wall exhaust system, too.

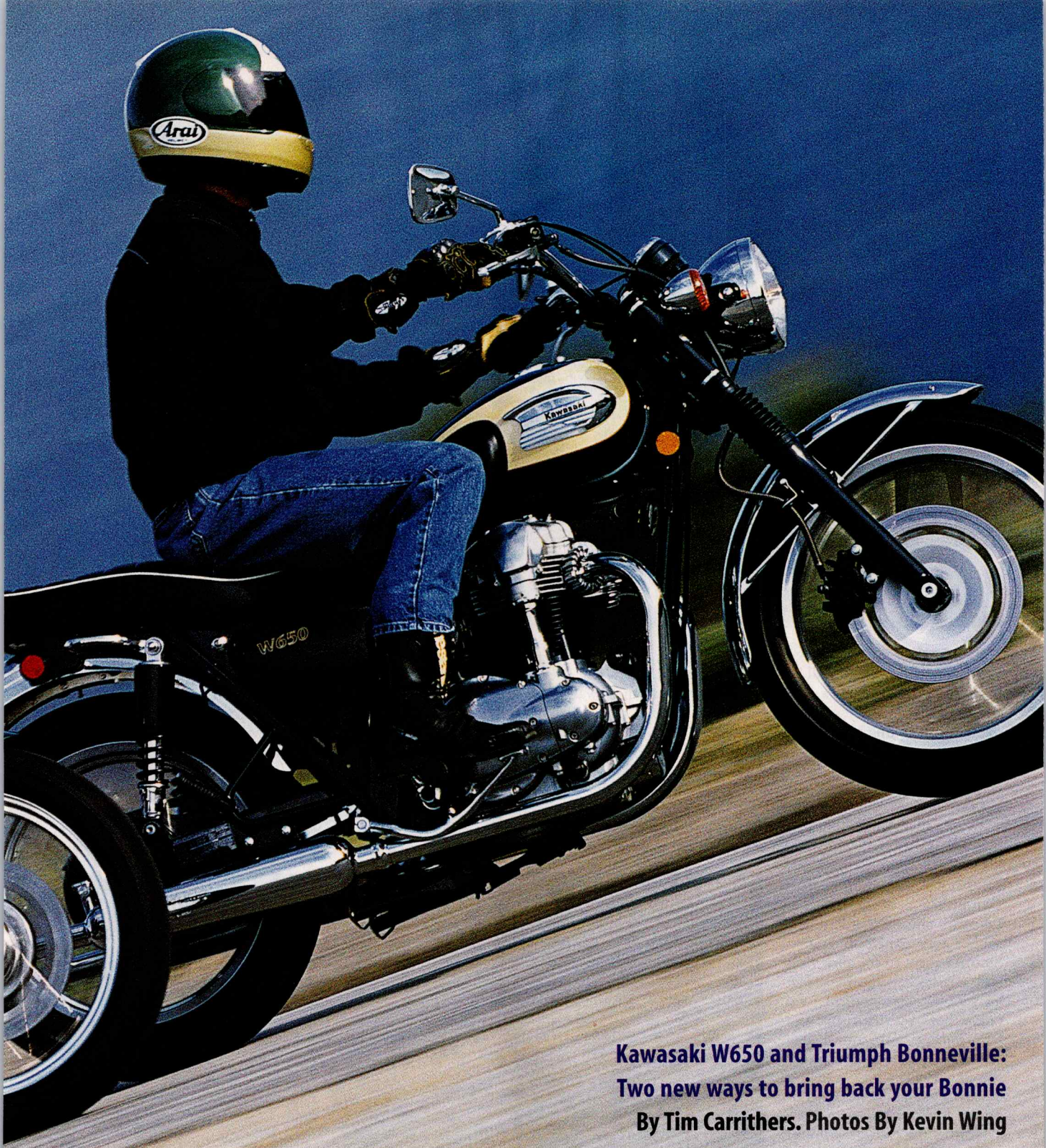
The seat's less than 28 inches from the pavement, which makes idling along in traffic with 50,000 of your closest friends all that much easier, and there's that much less distance to cover should you decide to perform an impromptu Gary Busey. It's a fine cruiser from 40 to 70 mph, with a nice, relaxing cadence (fifth gear's a smidge taller than the old Intruder's), but above 85 mph or so the engine starts running out of breath and the handlebar gets all tingly.

What looks like a tough-guy rigid rear end is actually controlled by a rising-rate linkage single shock (with adjustable preload) with more than four inches of wheel travel. Between that, the thick seat and the bike's fatty tires, the Volusia's a cushy yet well-damped ride that feels to have more structural integrity than many cruisers costing more dough. As far as brakes go, the single front disc feels like plenty, because the rear's much more useful on cruiser-type bikes.

The paint's nice and thick-looking and so's the chrome, though those of the real-steel persuasion will be disappointed that the big fenders are plastic. Overall, the Volusia feels like a slightly anemic full-size cruiser (Harley or otherwise), with good suspension, a great gearbox and a rider who's been working out a lot ('cause the controls are all so nicely low-effort). The way things are going in cruiserdom, we'd bet this one'll be a winner for Suzuki. MC

Virtual Twins



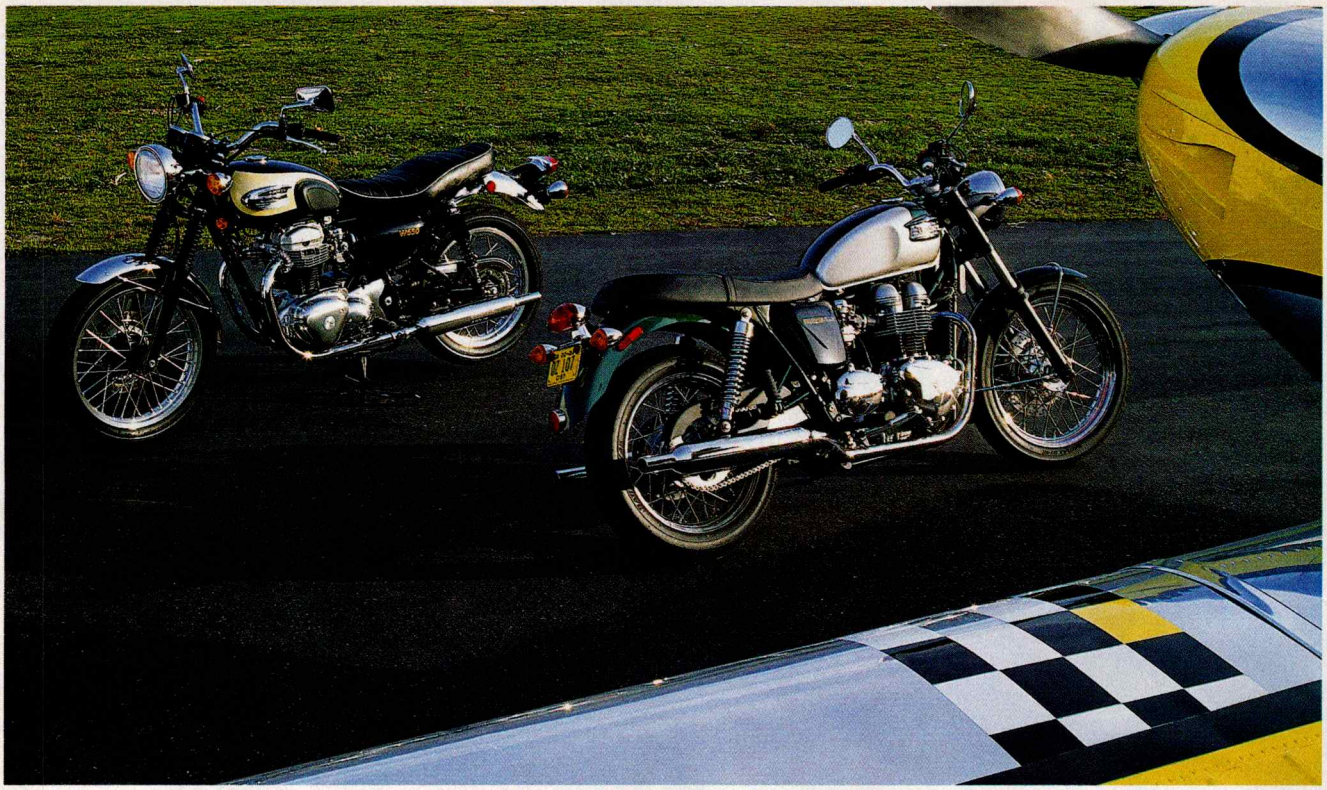


Kawasaki W650 and Triumph Bonneville: Two new ways to bring back your Bonnie

By Tim Carrithers. Photos By Kevin Wing

TURNING OLD MEMORIES INTO NEW motorcycles is tough enough on its own. But reanimating Triumph's venerable Bonneville—the epitome of cool to an entire generation—is only slightly easier than, say, cloning Marilyn Monroe. Even if you could, gentlemen these days prefer a different sort of blonde.

Remembrance is kind, but even the most delusional Anglophile knows a genetically exact copy of a 1966 T120/R could never live up to its own legend. The thing that thundered past like a Saturn-V rocket with pushrods when you were 18 years old becomes an obstinate and flimsy little brute with no starter button when you're 43. The late '60s Bonneville still has the same kind of lean, focused outline as a .44 Magnum, Winchester Model-94, a P-51 Mustang...or Ms. Monroe. Filling in the details that make up a modern motorcycle takes some artistic license. But how much? Kawasaki Heavy Industries and Triumph Motorcycles Ltd. have two paradoxically different answers: the W650 and the brand-new Bonneville.



KAWASAKI W650

For those bent on getting all Smithsonian about it, the W650 does have its own genealogy, a short strand of DNA from Kawasaki's first Bonneville impressionist: the '66 W1. Created prior to the discovery of styling in Japan, the forgettable, 624cc imitation of a preunit British 650 made 47 horsepower at 6500 rpm—measured at the copywriter's brainstem—and set you back $912 in the days when a new Bonneville went for $1309 (or approximately $7200 in 2001 dollars).

Thankfully, the W650 introduced to American roads last year took its visual cues from the right places. One look tells you the '01 W650 wants to be a '69 Bonneville even more than Triumph's new translation. From its chrome fenders, real rubber fork gaiters and faux-Smiths gauges to the alloy rims and peashooter mufflers that let a 360-degree vertical twin (a.k.a. both pistons rising and falling together) sound like one, the W650 is the more-convincing Elvis impersonator. There's even an honest-to-Ed-Turner kickstarter.

Nearby, the cam-drive tower and bevel-gear case inject weird chunks of Ducati 350 Sebring into the mix. Beyond that, nobody really has to know about the W650's modern conveniences such as the eight valves, LCD odometer and clock hiding in the speedo face, bungee hooks, centerstand, or seat and integral steering lock. Turn the key, cue the choke and wonder why only Kawasaki has a handy neutral finder.

One romp on the kickstarter usually lights the air-cooled fire. Meanwhile, all of Starbucks basks in your Marlon Brandoness. Public Humiliation Avoidance Tip Number One: Kickstarting only works in neutral, and hands off the clutch. A polite British edge on the exhaust note lets everybody know you're not kidding while the cold-blooded twin warms up. Anyone over six-feet tall will wish for a little more room between the wheelbarrowesque flattrack bar and the stepped, tuck-and-roll seat. The W650 puts a '66 T120/R-spec 31.5 inches between your butt and Mother Tarmac—one inch more than the new Bonnie.

It's all there: the air-cooled vertical-twin, the triangular engine case, the Smiths-style gauges. Kawasaki has done a convincing job of replicating the old Bonnie. Electronic instruments and integrated ignition/fork lock are good things.

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MT90HB16RWL	91.95
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150/70ZR17	102.97
160/60ZR17	105.95
160/70ZR17	113.97
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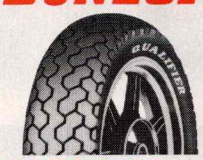

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110/80ZR18	107.95

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TK17 Rear	
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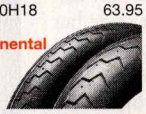
120/90H18	63.95

Continental Blitz



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100/90X19	49.95
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MH90X21 C926	59.95
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150/90X15 WWW	113.95
170/80X15	108.95
170/80X15 WWW	111.95
MT90X16	73.95
MT90X16 WWW	103.95
130/90X16 WWW	105.95
140/90X16	77.95
150/80X16 WWW	117.95
160/80X16	94.95

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Considering the W650 makes less than half the horsepower of a current 600 sportbike and weighs 70-something pounds more, the Kawasaki pulls hard enough to get your attention up around 7000 rpm. OK, so it's not what we'd call fast. Take comfort in the fact that 90 mph at the end of a 14.2-second quarter would beat a '60s Bonneville, but just. True to the original plot, Kawasaki's 40-inch twin has an admirably flat torque spread to fall back on, peaking at 37.7 foot-pounds at 4250 rpm. Even amid the silliness of L.A.'s vehicular excess, the Kawasaki draws more "Is that what I think it is?" double takes than the typical V-twin-powered Sunset-Strip hot rod. And thanks to its wide bar and skinny tires, the Kawasaki steers more like an oversized Schwinn beach cruiser than a 472-pound (wet) motorcycle. That agility is all the more surprising considering the unsportsmanlike wheelbase and steering geometry. An archetypal '66 Bonnie is still almost two inches shorter axle-to-axle.

The W650 holds an even four gallons of unleaded, enough for approximately 140 miles of uninterrupted freeway travel. (Although the Editorial Cheeks were never good for more than 100. Maybe it's just us.) Indicating 80 mph on its new/old speedo, the single balance-shaft and rubber-mounted engine keep life fairly placid, but it can be bloody drafty. That wide bar deploys the leather-jacketed human torso like an America's-Cup spinnaker, turning a stiff headwind into a succession of unsolicited steering inputs. Add the ribbed Bridgestone front tire's fondness for rain grooves, and simply going straight becomes harder than it should be. Cornering at a sporty clip, however, is almost too easy. The wide bar, skinny tires and soft suspension make steering so light it borders on numb. Some grinding begins before sportbike aficionados expect it, but this Kawasaki proves retro needn't be a polite way to say watermelon truck. The phenomenon currently known as "brisk acceleration" occurs only from 5000 to 7000 rpm, and requires frequent trips to the gearbox. Wicked up thusly on a twisty road, the steel-tube chassis, soft suspension and a fade-prone front brake amount to a reasonable degree of grinding and wallowing. Despite stiffer springs and new damping entrails in the 39mm fork for '01, the W650 is much happier at an easy trot.

TRIUMPH BONNEVILLE

Let your eyes swallow it whole and the Bonneville couldn't be anything else. That's exactly why emeritus members of the Saturday Morning Style Council pick it apart. It's bigger than a '66. The Kawasaki's pipes say T120/R, but the bow-legged mufflers diverg-

Although evocative, the Bonneville's profile is not a direct rip of the previous machine but is instead modernized and, to some extent, sanitized. The Bonnie's engine looks the part and handily outperforms the Kawasaki's engine. We'd love to see a tach standard some day.

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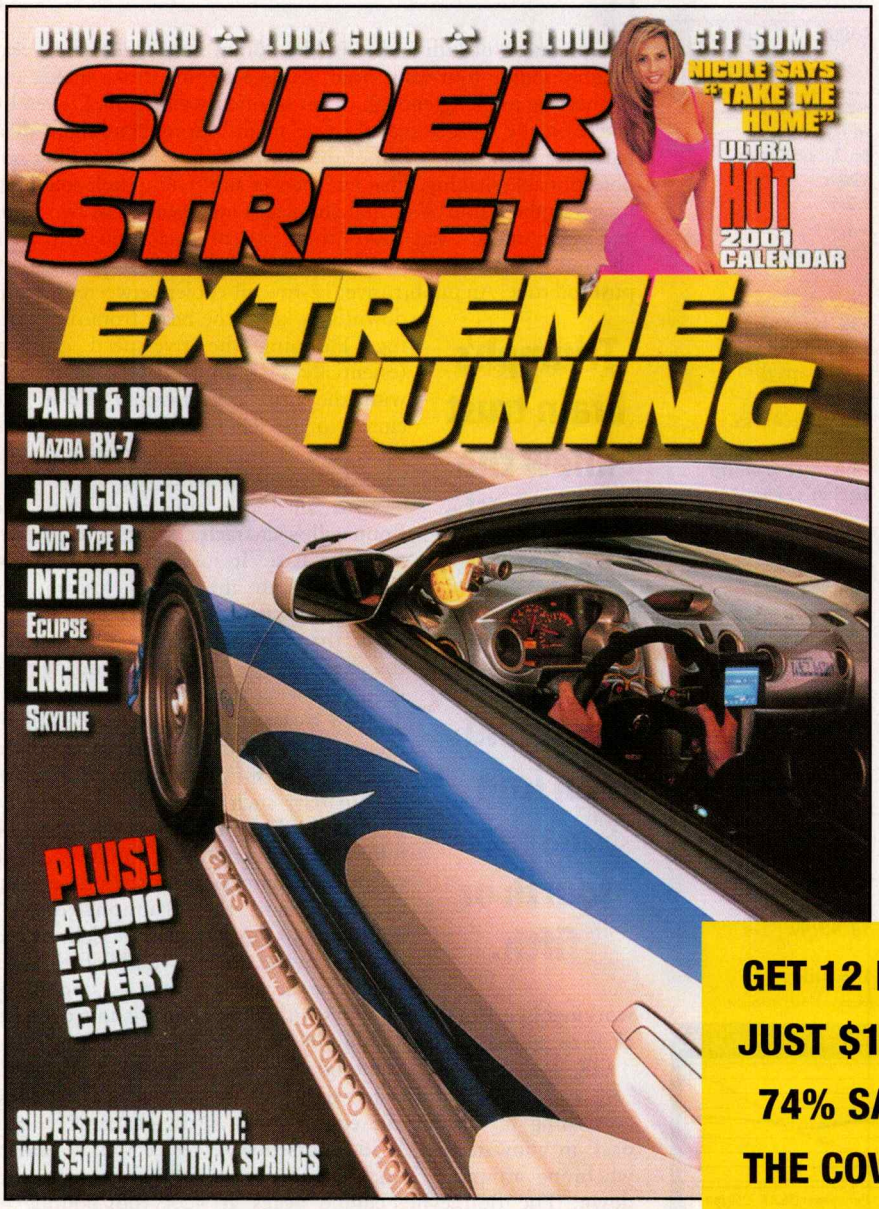

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ing from either side of the Bonneville's box-section swingarm say…well, nothing. There's no tach or centerstand. There are no pukka rubber kneepads on the fleshy tank, and what about that Japanese-looking seam visible underneath? And the thing weighs 499 pounds wet—nearly 100 more than its ancestors.

The verdict? Guilty-as-charged, with mitigating circumstances. Triumph's brain trust knew the Bonneville had to be a solid motorcycle first and an icon maybe fourth or fifth. To whine about the historical accuracy of this or the absence of that misses the point. Which is this: Everything that makes the '01 bike a less-faithful Bonneville makes it a better day-in-and-day-out motorcycle, and one commoners can afford.

The heart and bones are all right there. Triumph's 790cc interpretation of the 360-degree vertical-twin is a genuinely functional interpretation of kith and kin. The 86mm bore makes for a reasonably roomy four-valve head, while a 68mm stroke makes the connecting rod long enough to cut secondary vibration. Driven by a gear on the right side of the four main-bearing crankshaft, dual balancers in the upper half of the horizontally split cases filter out objectionable shaking. That lets the wet-sump lump bolt solidly in its steel-tube frame. A central chain and idler gear drive two cams and eight valves. That makes the head compact enough to let a chrome, oil return line between the cylinders impersonate a pushrod tube. An unobtrusive, 12-row oil-cooler between the front downtubes keeps the beast from overheating. Flopping the five-speed gearbox (essentially a Triumph Triple's six-speeder with the fifth cog missing) moves the clutch to the left side, allowing the final drive and compulsory triangular engine cover to live on the right.

Triumph's brain trust knew the Bonneville had to be a solid motorcycle first and an icon maybe fourth or fifth.

With all those bits in motion, the Bonneville's character favors the present over the past. It just takes awhile. For riders with an abbreviated inseam, the Triumph's seat is an inch closer to the street than the Kawasaki's. Then there's the history quiz called "Finding the Ignition Switch." Pray once for whoever decided to leave it on the left headlight mount, and again for the mastermind who gave the fork lock a key of its own. Fortunately, such irritants are few. The Bonneville does insist its choke knob be fully deployed for at least a minute. Once warm, electronic communication between the carbs and the Triumph's digital-ignition box makes power delivery as good, or better, than anybody's fuel injection. The driveline is just as smooth. A workmanlike clutch and smooth-shifting transmission come as close to perfection as anything in the business.

OK, so it sounds to some like a twin-cam blender. Triumph's "off-road" pipes and carb jets should arrive any day now. Besides, everything the Bonneville engine gives up in character it gets back in convenience. A 56.8-horsepower, 790cc mill is underwhelming around a bunch of 100-horse 600s, but write this down: The Bonneville engine peaks at 42.1 foot-pounds of torque at 7000 rpm, but 90 percent of that is on-line at 2750 revs. When top gear is good from 30 mph to the naughty side of 100 mph, you needn't shift much unless you're in a hurry. Consider the missing tachometer a cosmetic hardship—a concession to that magic $6999 price tag—just like the optional centerstand and the pair of 5mm Allen bolts you unscrew to remove the seat, only to discover the tool kit is optional, too. Maybe you

	Kawasaki W650	Triumph Bonneville
PRICE		
MSRP	$6599	$6999
ENGINE		
Type	a-c vertical-twin	a-c vertical-twin
Valve arrangement	sohc, 8v	sohc, 8v
Bore x stroke	72.0 x 83.0mm	86.0 x 68.0mm
Displacement	676cc	790cc
Compression ratio	8.6:1	9.2:1
Transmission	5-speed	5-speed
Final drive	#525 chain	#530 chain
CHASSIS		
Weight	472 lb. (wet) 448 lb. (fuel tank empty)	499 lb. (wet) 473 lb. (fuel tank empty)
Fuel capacity	4.0 gal.	4.3 gal.
Rake/trail	27.0 deg./4.15 in. (105mm)	29.0 deg./4.6 in. (117mm)
Wheelbase	57.1 in. (1450mm)	58.8 in. (1494mm)
Seat height	31.5 in. (800mm)	30.5 in. (775mm)
SUSPENSION		
Front	39mm fork	41mm fork
Rear	dual shocks, adjustable for spring preload	dual shocks, adjustable for spring preload
Tire, front	100/90-19 Bridgestone Accolade	100/90-19 Bridgestone BT45
Tire, rear	130/80-18 Bridgestone Accolade	130/80-17 Bridgestone BT45
PERFORMANCE		
Corrected 1/4-mile*	13.75 sec. @ 94.54 mph	13.57 sec. @ 96.41 mph
0-60 mph	5.51 sec.	5.23 sec.
Top-gear roll-on, 60-80 mph	7.40 sec.	6.89 sec.
Fuel mileage (low/high/average)	41/50/44	34/49/42
Cruising range (exc. reserve)	141 miles	145 miles

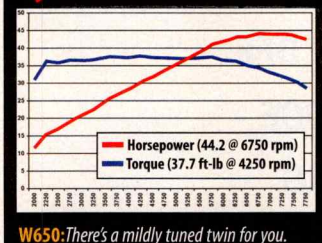
*Performance with test-session weather conditions corrected to sea-level standard conditions (59 degrees F, 29.92 in. of mercury)

Cheers & Jeers

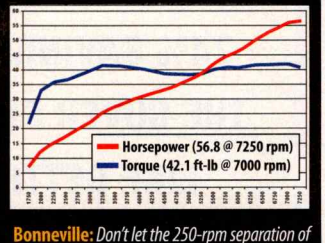
	KAW	TRI	VERDICT
Engine	8	9	*Torquey Triumph feels its size, could use more "character"*
Drivetrain	8	8	*Smooth gearboxes all around; hardly retro*
Handling	5	7	*Neither has much cornering clearance; Bonnie is modern*
Braking	8	6	*W650 wins this one; Bonnie's front is subpar*
Ride	6	8	*Bonnie's is more composed; W650's '01 improvements help*
Ergonomics	7	8	*Upright stance good for both; Bonnie's bar is better*
Features	8	7	*W650 feels about right, Bonnie is just a bit stripped*
Refinement	6	9	*Triumph is tops here; the W650 will take you back*
Value	8	9	*Bonnie is the real deal for a steal*
Fun Factor	7	8	*W650 improves for '01; Bonnie charms rather than thrills*
Overall*	8	9	*Kawi is an old bike made new; Triumph sets new standards*

*Overall rating is independent and not derived from category scores.

dyno chat:

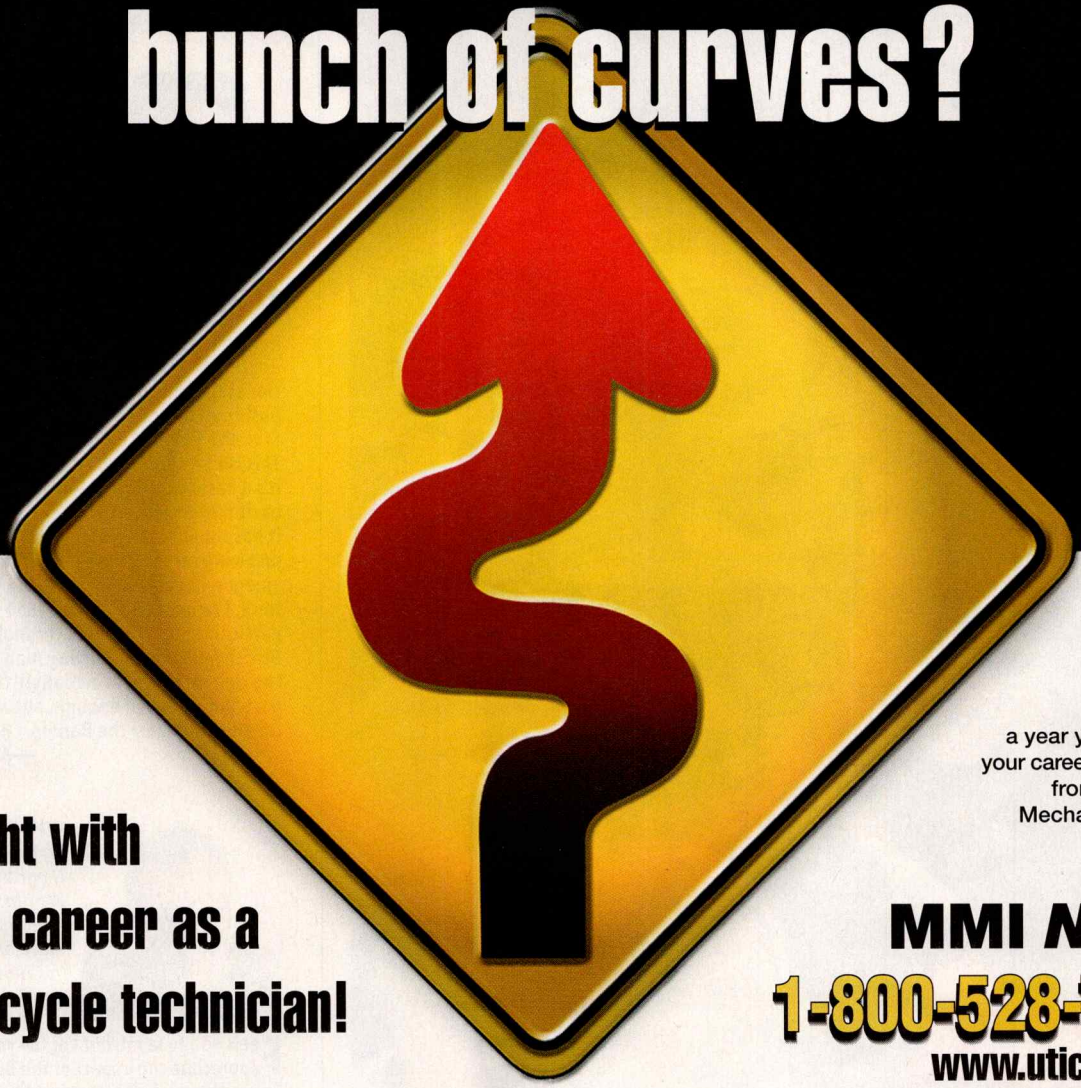


W650: *There's a mildly tuned twin for you. Virtually unwavering torque band proves there's sufficient oomph most of the time. Raw numbers aren't particularly impressive, but the little twin wins friends with its demeanor.*



Bonneville: *Don't let the 250-rpm separation of the horsepower and torque peaks fool you: This engine packs a healthy low-end surge. There's almost 42 foot-pounds at 3250 rpm. Plenty of flywheel mass masks the 5000-rpm slump.*

Life throwing you a bunch of curves?



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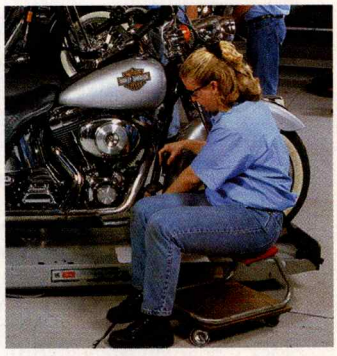

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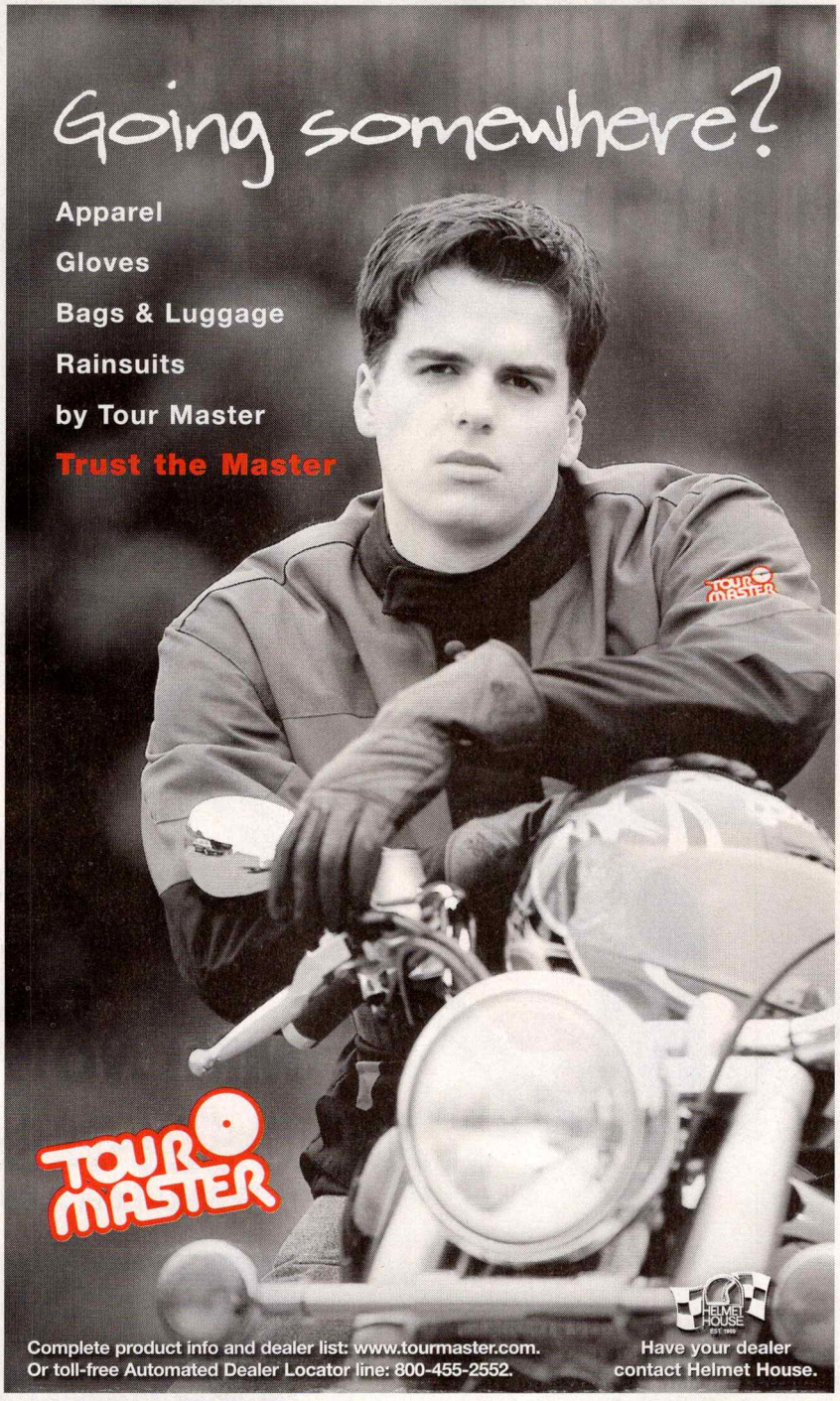

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Off the Record

boehm
Age: 38
Height: 6 ft.
Weight: 225 lb.
Inseam: 32 in.
Sushi or Fish 'n' Chips?
Fish 'n' Chips

Having been involved with the Bonneville's development process and having helped nudge Triumph's design team a degree or two further toward the functional side (not that they needed much pushing!), I'm pretty biased on this one. Still, the finished product is damn good. This isn't a sportbike, a tourer or a cruiser; it's a basic motorcycle—yet it acts like a basic motorcycle oughtta act. The fact that it has those seven letters on the tank are just icing on the cake—or, if your prefer, vinegar on yer fish 'n' chips. The W650? Heck, I remember riding a W650 during one particular prototype test through the British Midlands (following Alan Cathcart in the rain at 100 mph, actually!). It looks the part and runs well enough, but abilitywise, it's a notch below the Bonnie. Cheers!
—Mitch Boehm

cook
Age: 37
Height: 5 ft. 10 in.
Weight: 200 lb.
Inseam: 32 in.
Sushi or Fish 'n' Chips?
Sushi

Feels odd to say it, but I'm too young to appreciate the impact of the Bonneville. To me, the original seems just like a pretty little motorcycle that—so many people have said this I can't help believe it—was the hot thing to have in the 1960s and '70s. (Same goes for the Sportster. Hard for me to imagine a time when the XL was the fastest bike on the road.) So that's probably why I like the Bonnie but don't exactly go ga-ga over it.

I'm actually a bit more enamored of the W650. In this great era of virtual reality and sanitized-for-your-protection encounters, the Kawasaki W650 is a refreshing change of pace. It looks old and it feels old. Kawasaki had the guts to make it as close to a true vintage Bonnie experience as it could stomach. Yet it's easier to understand Triumph's course, making a new/old standard that's pretty much a modern piece, and I don't blame Bloor and company for this design philosophy. Too bad the cheap shocks and wimpy front brake so loudly call attention to the low price. I understand that potential Bonnie buyers won't cross-shop Japanese brands, but I'd rather have the naked Bandit 1200 for my $7000. As evocative? No way. More functional? Absolutely. ***—Marc Cook***

should hope the archetypal urbane boor won't notice.

Chuffing faster than 70 mph, he or she will pick up a little tingle through the Bonnie's grips and pegs. The payoff is gobs more passing power. Enough to push the Bonnie from 60 to 80 mph in just less than seven seconds vs. almost eight seconds for the Kawasaki. The Bonneville's 4.3-gallon tank puts fuel stops just a bit farther apart than those on the four-gallon Kawasaki, also. Despite barely enough legroom for a 35-inch inseam, the narrower handlebar (less of a drag in a headwind) and wider seat (less of a pain in the aspiration)

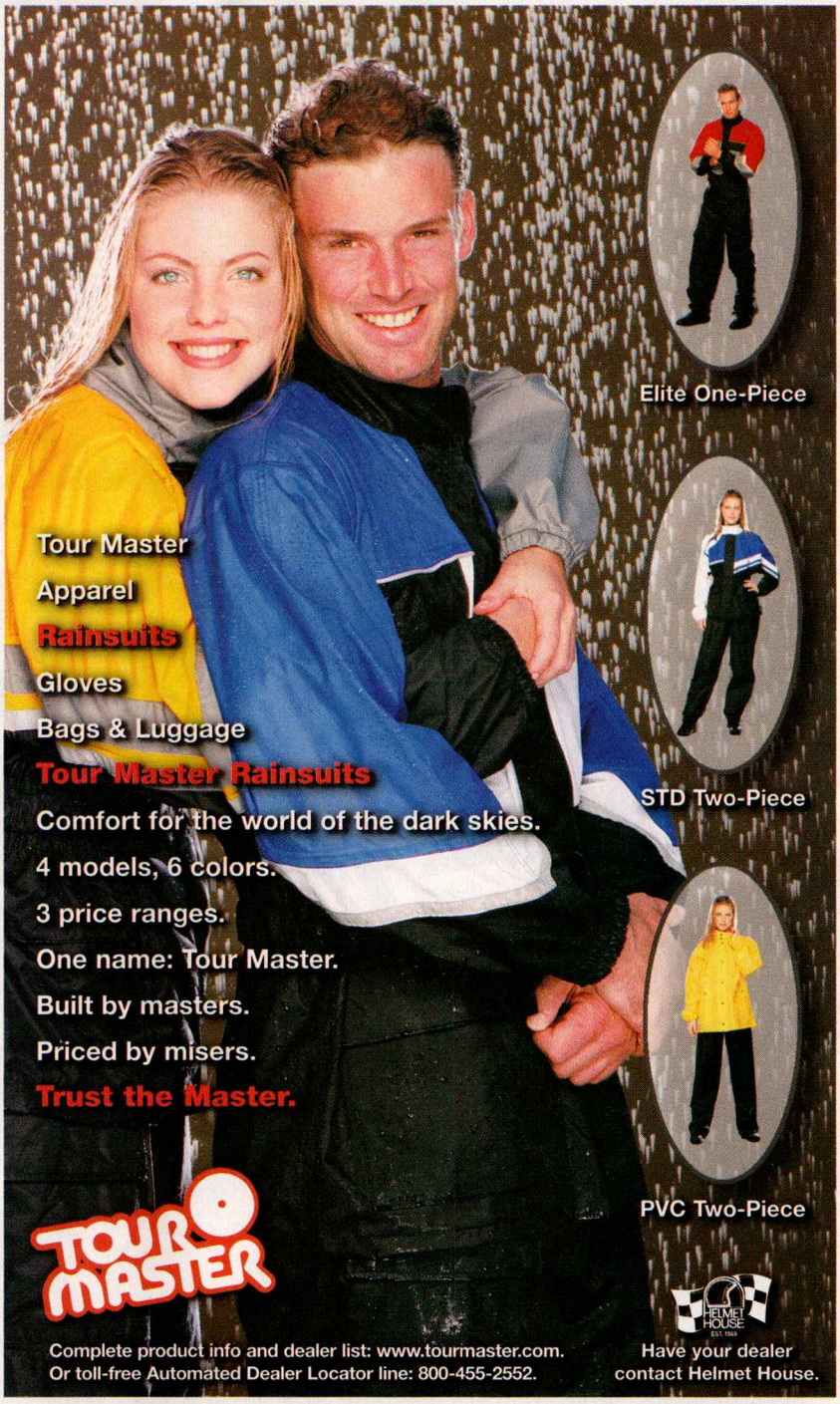
Cheesy price-point shocks and a semi-flaccid front brake are the only deterrents to twisty-road happiness.

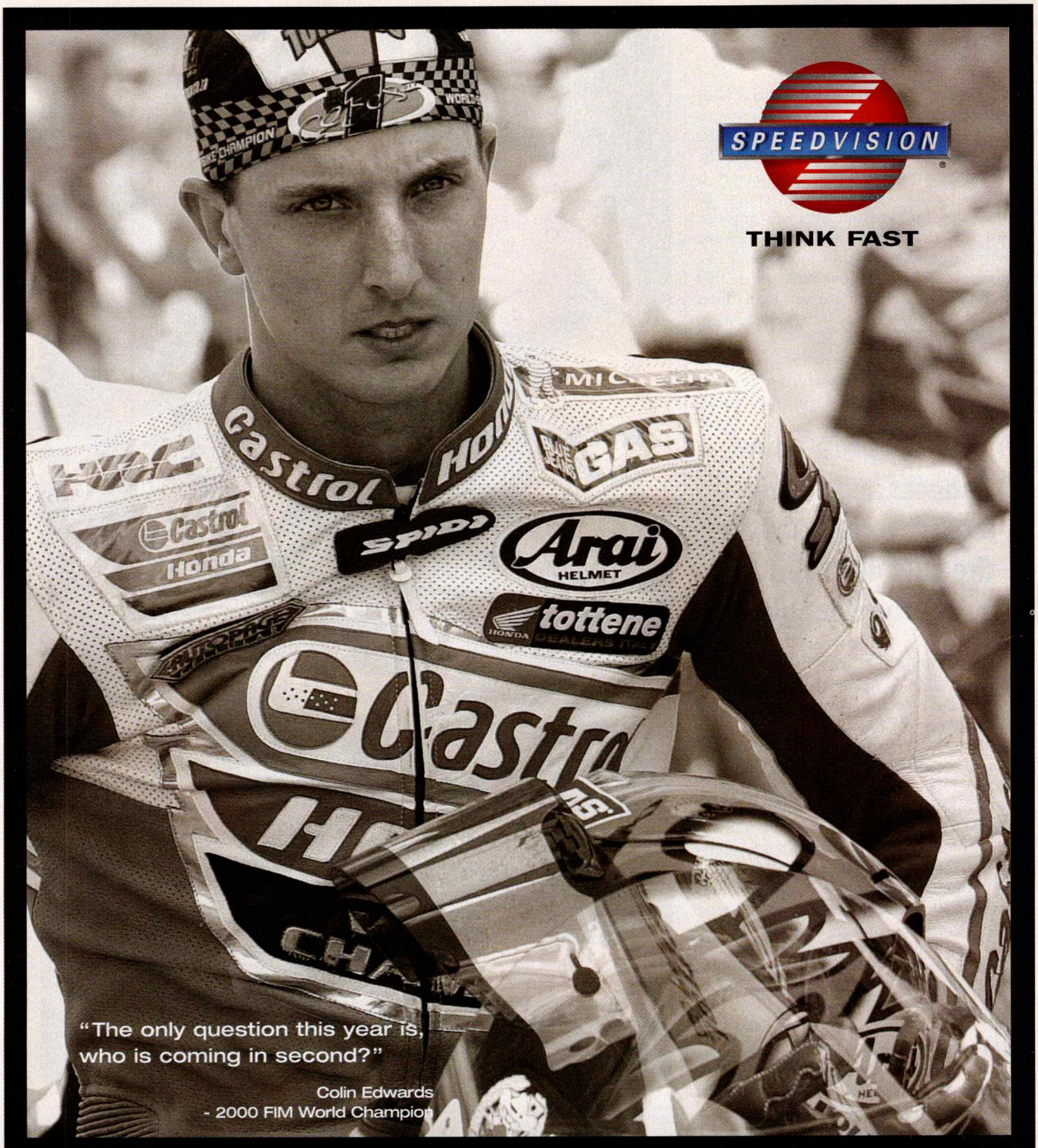
make an 800-mile lost weekend sound almost rational. Accurate steering, fluid power and tolerable cornering clearance: For anyone old enough to know Gary Nixon had nothing to do with Watergate, this Bonneville has the juice to put regular Saturday-morning scrapes back on the calendar. Cheesy price-point shocks and a semiflaccid front brake are the only deterrents to twisty-road happiness. Triumph's firmer, 41mm fork conveys more feedback with less flex than the W650 unit. Bridgestone's tube-type BT45 tires stick well enough to carry out the Bonneville's broadband mission, but like the Kawasaki's more chronologically correct Bridgestone Accolades they have tubes inside.

RETRO RECKONING

Unlike other instances of Britannia and Japan in pursuit of the same demographic, everybody wins in this story. Clear thinking, modern manufacturing and a corporate credit line really can cast faded memories into something besides a big Vee. And, depending on your priorities, there's more than one way to go about it. Kawasaki isn't betting the farm on the W650, so it can afford to be a more-convincing Bonneville—even if that means it's a less-capable motorcycle.

But for the corporation John Bloor raised from the dead in '91, this Bonneville had to be more than some picturesque homage to a fallen empire. It had to work well enough to justify building a new one—which is just what it does. MC





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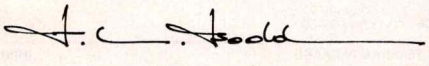
money went. At their finest, they are objects of beauty for which no sacrifice seems unreasonable. All of a sudden it all seems so rational and worthwhile. The process may have been painful, but the product, in tangible terms, imparts a very real sense of accomplishment.

But the machine is just part of the equation. After all, what use is a performer without a stage on which to perform? And what better stage than Daytona? It's...well, it's mythic, immense and tilted up at a crazy angle—a spectacular arena within which to participate in a big spectacle. As Heritage Racing team member and patriarch Bob Hansen (who has been involved in more than his fair share of Daytona spectacles) has proclaimed on occasion, "Daytona isn't just a racetrack, it's a happening."

Daytona *is* a happening. It is the site of the first major motorcycling event in the world each and every March, and seems as perennial as the passage of winter into spring. It's an opportunity to step into the Florida sunshine and see what everyone's been up to during the long break in competition. Invariably, there are new machines and new experiments. Some are successful, some are not. But to compete at Daytona on any basis is to do something exceptional that scarcely requires justification. Any participant is likely to come away with a sense of accomplishment—along with bigger and better plans for the next Daytona.

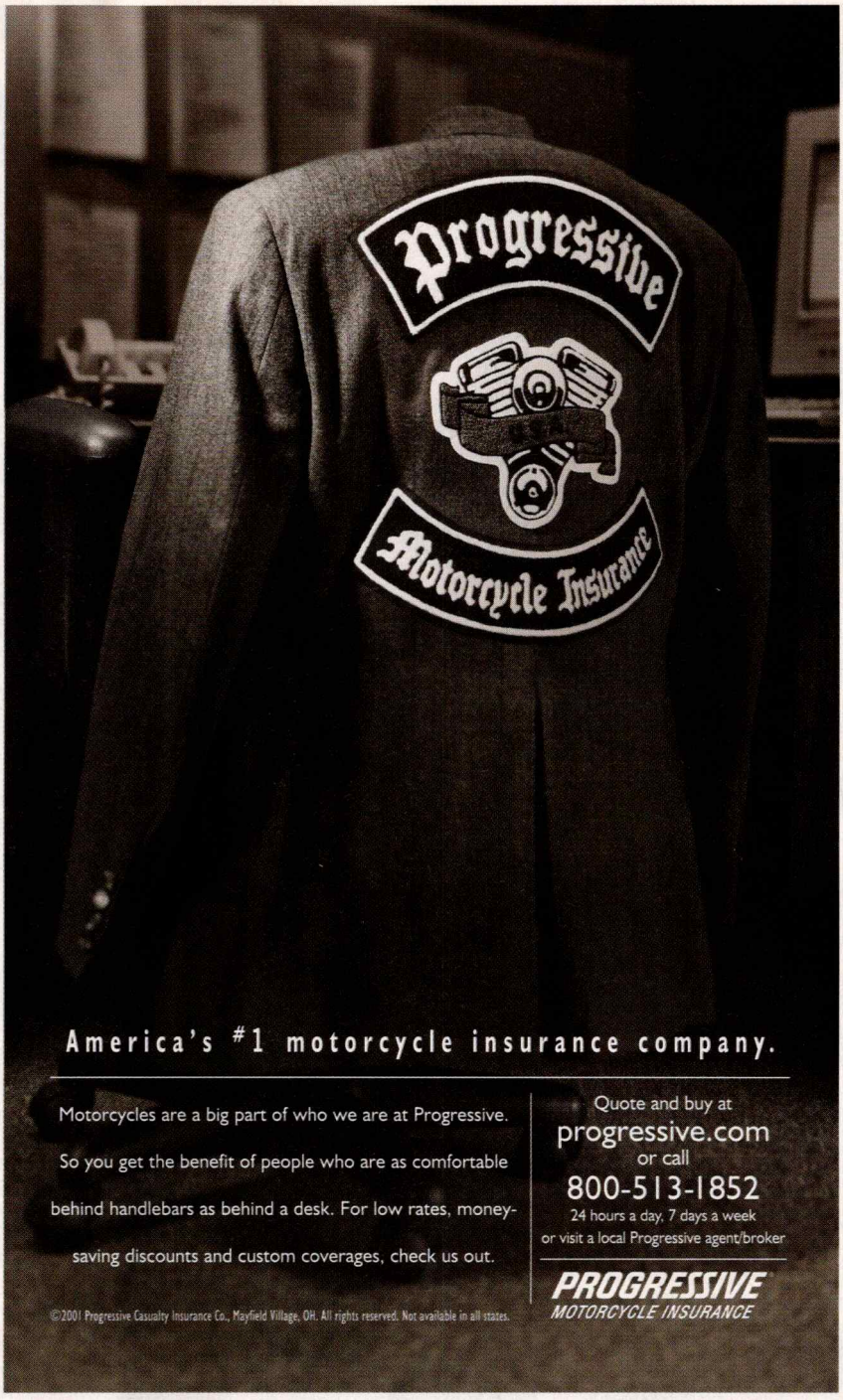
As Daytona is world-class, so is the company one is likely to keep there during Bike Week. Sure, the fastest machines and the brightest stars will participate in the 200-miler later in the week. But American racing legends such as Dick Mann, Bart Markel and Gary Nixon, as well as a number of their foreign counterparts, are on the vintage scene and are a lot more approachable than one might imagine. Sharing the track and paddock with motorcyclists of their stature is a rare privilege.

If you're interested in competing next year, you better start planning now. AHRMA's 2002 Daytona-fest will be here a lot sooner than you think, and you'll save yourself a lot of angst if you start now. Find a bike, fashion it into a racer and bring it to the Speedway. It sure beats following the elephants!



Please direct correspondence to HRTGrace@aol.com.

Editor's note: *Please join us in welcoming Mr. Patrick Bodden, architect, racebike builder and long-time motorcycle enthusiast, to our pages as a regular columnist.*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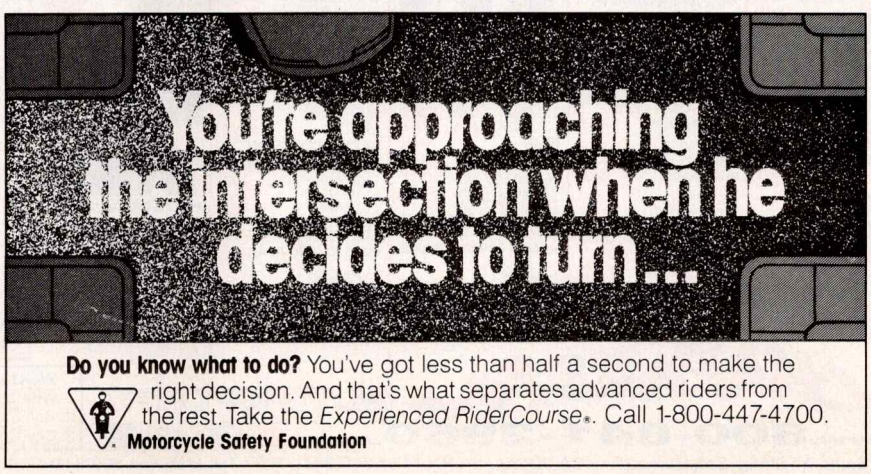
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170/80H15	110.97
MT90H16	99.97
MT90H16 WWW	110.97
140/90H16	106.97
140/90H16 WWW	117.97
150/80H16	112.97
160/80H16	138.97

*V RATED FOR YAMAHA V-MAX

DUNLOP

DUNLOP D207 ZR

FRONT	SALE
120/60ZR17	84.97
120/70ZR17	83.97
130/70ZR16	82.97
REAR	**SALE**
160/60ZR17	101.97
170/60ZR17	104.97
180/55ZR17	109.97
190/50ZR17	144.97

DUNLOP CRUISEMAX

FRONT	SALE
130/90H16 RWL	89.97
130/90H16 BLK	83.97
130/90H16 WWW	81.97
120/90H18 RWL	83.97
100/90H19 RWL	62.97
110/90H19 RWL	73.97
80/90H21 BLK	73.97
REAR	**SALE**
140/90H15 RWL	83.97
140/90H15 BLK	77.97
150/90H15 RWL	85.97
170/80H15 RWL	96.97
140/90H16 RWL	83.97
140/90H16 BLK	85.97
140/90H16 WWW	102.97
150/80H16 RWL	100.97
150/80H16 WWW	100.97

AVON

AVON SUPER VENOM

FRONT AM20	SALE
100/90V16	72.97
110/90V16	79.97
120/80V16	79.97
110/90V18	83.97
REAR AM18	**SALE**
130/90V16	89.97
150/80V16	108.97
130/80V18	91.97
140/70V18	108.97
100/90V19	76.97

AVON AV27

FRONT	SALE
120/80ZR16	108.97
130/70ZR16	119.97
110/80ZR17	108.97
120/60ZR17	110.97
120/70ZR17	110.97
130/60ZR17	119.97
110/80ZR18	110.97

AVON AZARO

FRONT AV39	SALE
130/70ZR16	143.97
120/60ZR17	127.97
120/70ZR17	127.97
120/70ZR17 *	127.97

*CBR1100XX & GSXR1300 HAYABUSA FITMENT

REAR AV40	SALE
160/60ZR17	153.97
170/60ZR17	157.97
180/55ZR17 **	167.97
180/55ZR17 ***	167.97
190/50ZR17	179.97
190/50ZR17 ***	179.97

**CBR1100XX FITMENT
***GSXR1300 HAYABUSA FITMENT

AVON AM22/AM23

FRONT AM22	SALE
120/70VB16	108.97
110/80VB18	111.97
REAR AM23	**SALE**
140/80VB16	142.97
160/80VB16	150.97
180/60VB16	165.97
200/60VB16	183.97
130/70VB18	128.97
150/70VB18	149.97
180/55VB18	175.97
200/55VB18	183.97

*FRONT OR REAR FITMENT

AVON

AVON AZARO

FRONT AV35	SALE
110/70ZR17	111.97
110/80ZR17	111.97
120/60ZR17	114.97
120/70ZR17	114.97
110/80ZR18	116.97
REAR AV36	**SALE**
160/80ZR16	133.97
140/80ZR17	127.97
150/70ZR17	133.97
160/60ZR17 (4.5"RIM)	139.97
160/60ZR17 (5.0"RIM)	139.97
160/70ZR17	155.97
170/60ZR17 (5.0"RIM)	143.97
170/60ZR17 (5.5"RIM)	143.97
180/55ZR17	151.97
190/50ZR17	163.97
160/60ZR18	135.97

BRIDGESTONE

BRIDGESTONE BT45 SPORT TOURING

FRONT	SALE
100/90H16	55.97
100/80H17	65.97
110/70H17	66.97
110/80H17	66.97
120/70H17	68.97
90/90H18	57.97
100/80H18	60.97
100/90H18	59.97
REAR	**SALE**
130/90H16	72.97
110/90H17	69.97
120/80H17	59.97
130/70H17	72.97
130/80H17	60.97
140/70H17	75.97
150/70H17	76.97
110/80H18	59.97
110/90H18	59.97
120/80H18	61.97
130/70H18	75.97
140/70H18	76.97
150/70H18	78.97

BRIDGESTONE SPITFIRE S11 SPORT-TOURING

FRONT	SALE
130/90H16	77.97
100/90H18	44.97
110/90H18	45.97
110/90H18 RWL	49.97
120/90H18 RWL	52.97
90/90H19	45.97
100/90H19	49.97
100/90H19 RWL	52.97
110/90H19	50.97
110/90H19 RWL	55.97
REAR	**SALE**
140/90H15 RWL	67.97
150/90H15 RWL	72.97
130/90H16	59.97
130/90H16 RWL	65.97
140/90H16 RWL	72.97
130/90H17	60.97
110/90H18	52.97
120/90H18	54.97
130/90H18	61.97

BRIDGESTONE BT010

FRONT	SALE
110/70ZR17 54W	71.97
120/60ZR17 55W	71.97
120/65ZR17 56W	72.97
120/70ZR17 58W	73.97
130/70ZR16 61W	71.97
REAR	**SALE**
150/60ZR18 67W	87.97
160/60ZR17 69W	87.97
170/60ZR17 72W	90.97
180/55ZR17 73W	94.97
190/50ZR17 73W	109.97
200/50ZR17 75W	112.97

HONDA CBR929RR	PRICE
120/70ZR17 58W-FRONT	126.99
190/50ZR17 73W-REAR	143.99

BRIDGESTONE

BRIDGESTONE BT020

FRONT	SALE
120/60ZR17 55W	71.97
120/70ZR17 58W	73.97
110/80ZR18 58W	72.97
120/70ZR18 59W	77.97
REAR	**SALE**
150/70ZR17 69W	89.97
160/60ZR17 69W	87.97
170/60ZR17 72W	90.97
160/70ZR17 73W	93.97
180/55ZR17 73W	94.97
160/60ZR18 70W	94.97

BRIDGESTONE BATTLAX BT45 HIGH PERFORMANCE TIRE

FRONT	SALE
110/90V16	60.97
120/80V16	64.97
110/80V17	76.99
100/90V18	62.97
110/80V18	64.97
110/90V18	64.97
100/90V19	64.97
REAR	**SALE**
130/90V16	74.97
150/80V16	86.97
120/90V17	71.97
130/90V17	74.97

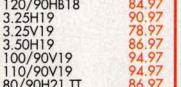
METZELER

METZELER ME88F/ ME88 MARATHON ME88F FRONT

	SALE
100/90H18	84.97
MARATHON REAR	**SALE**
200/70HB15	133.97
MU90HB16	108.97
130/90HB17	108.97

METZELER ME33 LASER

FRONT	PRICE
110/90V16	91.97
120/80V16	97.97
110/80V17	94.97
90/90H18	75.97
100/90V18	89.97
110/80V18	89.97
110/90V18	97.97
120/90HB18	84.97
3.25H19	90.97
3.25V19	78.97
3.50H19	86.97
100/90V19	94.97
110/90V19	94.97
80/90H21 TT	86.97
90/90H21	95.97



METZELER ME99A PERFECT

REAR	SALE
130/90V16	107.97
140/90V16	117.97
150/80V16	127.97
130/90V17	109.97
4.00V18	93.97
120/90V18	103.97
130/80V18	109.97

METZELER MEZ3/MEZ3

MEZ3 FRONT	SALE
130/70ZR16	103.97
110/70ZR17	96.97
120/60ZR17	103.97
120/70ZR17	103.97
MEZ3 REAR	
150/60ZR17	126.97
160/60ZR17	128.97
170/60ZR17	131.97
180/55ZR17	133.97
190/50ZR17	155.97
MEZ3 RACING FRONT	
130/70ZR16	139.97
110/70ZR17	133.97
120/60ZR17	139.97
120/65ZR17	143.97
120/70ZR17	139.97
120/70ZR17 RS2	139.97
MEZ3 RACING REAR	
150/60ZR17	153.97
160/60ZR17	158.97
170/60ZR17 RS2	169.97
180/55ZR17	172.97
180/55ZR17 RS2	172.97
190/50ZR17	182.97

METZELER

METZELER ME880 MARATHON

FRONT	SALE
130/90H16	84.97
150/80H16	95.97
120/70VB17	86.97
120/80V17	89.97
150/80HR17*	131.97
110/90H18	101.97
120/90H18	88.97
130/70HR18	76.97
100/90H19	76.97
110/90H19	80.97
80/90H21	74.97
REAR	**SALE**
140/80HB15	107.97
140/90HB15	103.97
150/80VB15	109.97
150/90HB15	113.97
180/70HB15	119.97
130/90HB16	97.97
140/90HB16	107.97
150/80HB16	120.97
160/80HR16	135.97
180/70HR16*	148.97
140/80HB17	107.97
160/70VB17	108.97

*VALKYRIE REPLCMNT.

MEZ2 FRONT

	SALE
120/80ZR16	92.97
110/80ZR17	93.97
MEZ2 REAR	**SALE**
150/80ZR16	123.97
130/80HR17	118.97
140/80ZR17	119.97
170/60ZR18	138.97

METZELER ME55A METRONIC

REAR	SALE
130/90V16	112.97
150/80VB16 MBS	135.97
130/90V17	113.97
140/80VB17 MBS	125.97
140/80VB17 M.G*	125.97
150/70VB17	135.97
160/70VB17 MBS	140.97
120/90V18	108.97
130/80V18	114.97

*MOTO GUZZI FITMENT
MBS = METZELER BELTED SYSTEM

METZELER MEZ1 ME Z1 FRONT

	SALE
110/80ZR17	96.97
130/60ZR17	107.97
110/80ZR18	101.97
120/70ZR18	101.97
ME Z1 REAR	
150/60ZR18	133.97
160/60ZR18	135.97

METZELER MEZ4 ME Z4 FRONT

	SALE
120/60ZR17	100.97
120/70ZR17	100.97
120/70ZR17 (B)*	100.97
110/80ZR18	97.97
120/70ZR18	97.97
ME Z4 REAR	**SALE**
150/70ZR17	122.97
160/60ZR17	124.97
160/70ZR17	127.97
170/60ZR17	127.97
180/55ZR17	130.97
190/50ZR17	151.97
160/60ZR18	131.97

*REINFORCED BMW FITMENT

PIRELLI

PIRELLI DRAGON GT MTR03/04

FRONT MTR03 GT	SALE
120/80ZR-16	95.97
110/80ZR17	97.97
130/60ZR17	107.97
REAR MTR04 GT	
150/80ZR16	129.97

PIRELLI

PIRELLI DRAGON GTS MTR23/24

FRONT MTR23	SALE
120/60ZR17	104.97
120/70ZR17	104.97
110/80ZR18	102.97
120/70ZR18	102.97
REAR MTR24	**SALE**
150/70ZR17	127.97
160/60ZR17	130.97
160/70ZR17	133.97
170/60ZR17	134.97
180/55ZR17	136.97
190/50ZR17	158.97
160/60ZR18	137.97

PIRELLI DRAGON MTR02 RADIAL

REAR MTR02	SALE
150/60ZR18	139.97
200/50ZR17 CORSA	194.97

PIRELLI MT09/08 MATCH SPORT TOURING BIAS PLY

FRONT MT09	SALE
110/90V16	78.97
120/80VB16	83.97
110/80V17	78.97
120/70VB17	83.97
100/90V18	82.97
110/80VB18	87.97
110/90V18	83.97
100/90V19	84.97
REAR MT08	
130/90V16	104.97
150/80VB16	113.97
130/80VB17	104.97
130/90V17	107.97
140/80VB17	108.97
150/70VB17	111.97
120/90V18	102.97
130/80V18	106.97
140/70VB18	108.97
150/70VB18	99.97

PIRELLI MT 69/68 STRADA

FRONT MT69	SALE
100/90H16	62.97
90/90H18	62.97
100/90H18	65.97
3.25H19	64.97
REAR MT68	
120/90H16	71.97
130/90H17	79.97
110/90H18	70.97
120/80H18	72.97
4.00H18	74.97
120/90H18	74.97

PIRELLI

PIRELLI MTR21 EVO

FRONT	SALE
130/70ZR16	107.97
110/70ZR17	100.97
120/60ZR17	107.97
120/70ZR17	107.97
REAR MTR22 EVO	
150/60ZR17	130.97
160/60ZR17	135.97
170/60ZR17	137.97
180/55ZR17	140.97
190/50ZR17	162.97
FRONT MTR21C EVO CORSA RACING	
130/70ZR16	140.97
110/70ZR17	135.97
120/60ZR17	140.97
120/65ZR17	145.97
120/70ZR17	140.97
120/70ZR17 SC2	140.97

SC2 = SUPER CORSA/SPECIAL RACING

REAR MTR22C EVO CORSA RACING	
150/60ZR17	156.97
160/60ZR17	161.97
170/60ZR17 SC2	171.97
180/55ZR17	174.97
180/55ZR17 SC2	174.97
190/50ZR17	184.97

MICHELIN

MICHELIN PILOT RACE/ PILOT RACE SOFT

FRONT PILOT RACE	
120/70ZR-17	167.99
REAR PILOT RACE	
160/60ZR-17	210.99
170/60ZR-17	220.99
180/55ZR-17	224.99
FRONT RACE SOFT	
120/70ZR-17	167.99
REAR RACE SOFT	
160/60ZR-17	210.99
170/60ZR-17	220.99
180/55ZR-17	224.99

MICHELIN PILOT SPORT

FRONT	PRICE
130/70ZR-16	112.99
110/70ZR-17	107.99
120/60ZR-17	108.99
120/65ZR-17	111.99
120/70ZR-17	111.99
120/70ZR-17 YR1	112.99
REAR	**PRICE**
150/60ZR-17	128.99
160/60ZR-17	129.99
170/60ZR-17	136.99
180/55ZR-17	146.99
190/50ZR-17	150.99
190/50ZR-17 YR1	185.99
200/50ZR-17	183.99

MICHELIN

MICHELIN MACADAM 50

FRONT	PRICE
110/90V16	77.99
120/70V16	79.99
110/80V17	79.99
120/70V17	84.99
110/80V18	78.99
110/90V18	84.99
90/90H18	73.99
100/90H18	75.99
100/90V18	79.99
100/90V19	79.99
REAR	**PRICE**
150/90V15	73.99
130/90V17	96.99
150/80V16	100.99
150/70H17	95.99
160/70V17	120.99
140/80V17	101.99
130/70H17	87.99
130/90V17	95.99
130/70H18	86.99
130/80V18	97.99
110/90H18	77.99
120/90H18	87.99
120/90V18	91.99

MICHELIN MACADAM 90X SPORT RADIAL

FRONT	PRICE
120/80ZR-16	89.99
110/70ZR-17	85.99
110/80ZR-17	86.99
120/60ZR-17	89.99
120/70ZR-17	89.99
130/60ZR-17	89.99
110/80ZR-18	87.99
120/70ZR-17	90.99
130/70ZR-17	87.99
110/70ZR-17	87.99
REAR	**PRICE**
150/80ZR-16	113.99
150/70ZR-17	105.99
160/60ZR-17	109.99
170/60ZR-17	112.99
180/55ZR-17	118.99
160/60ZR-18	108.99
150/70ZR-18	110.99
190/55ZR-17	136.99

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TURNS EXISTING TURN SIGNALS INTO RUNNING LIGHTS AND FLASHING STOPLIGHTS

$62.99

DUNLOP

D207ZR PERFORMANCE PACKAGES

PACKAGE A:	FRONT: 120/70 X 17	REAR: 180/55 X 17	PRICE
HONDA:	CBR600F4 99-00		
KAWASAKI:	ZX7R 91-95		
SUZUKI:	GSXR750W 94-95		
YAMAHA:	YZF750R 94-98		181.97*
PACKAGE B:	**FRONT: 120/70 X 17**	**REAR: 190/55 X 17**	
HONDA:	CBR929RR 00		
KAWASAKI:	ZX7R 96-00, ZX900 00		
SUZUKI:	GSXR750 96-00, TL1000 98-00, GSX1300R 99-00		
YAMAHA:	YZFR1 00, YZF1000 98-99		198.97*
PACKAGE C:	**FRONT: 120/60 X 17**	**REAR: 160/60 X 17**	
HONDA:	CBR600F2, F3 91-99		
KAWASAKI:	ZX600G 98-99		
YAMAHA:	YZF600 94-99		172.97*
PACKAGE D:	**FRONT: 120/60 X 17**	**REAR: 180/55 X 17**	
SUZUKI:	GSXR600 97-00		
YAMAHA:	YZFR6 99-00		179.97*

ELITE 2 TOURING PACKAGE	PRICE
130/70 X 18F 160/80 X 16R	192.97*

*** $16.00 SHIPPING CHARGE FOR PACKAGES.**

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VEST $66.99
CHAPS $123.99

HIGHWAY ONE TRADITIONAL CHAPS
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REG. 237.99
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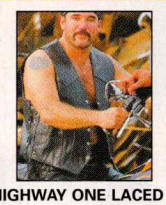

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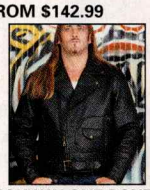

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SALE $199.97

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DOT APPROVED
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$34.99

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$34.99 EACH

MIRAGE MIRRORS SLOTTED (SET)
$63.60

FLAMED LEATHER GRIP COVERS W/FRINGE
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GRAB-ON ROAD DELUXE GRIPS
$15.99

NATIONAL CYCLE HEAVY DUTY WINDSHIELD
$142.99

NATIONAL CYCLE FLY SCREEN
FROM $60.99

NATIONAL CYCLE BEADED WINDSHIELD
$163.99

IRON CORE T-SHIRTS
M-XL $22.95
XXL $24.95

PRO GRIP SKULL GRIP
$11.99

PRO GRIP BILLET ALUMINUM GRIPS
$45.99

PRO GRIP BIG CRUISER GRIP MODEL 860
$10.99

PRO GRIP TOURING GEL GRIP MODEL 862
$11.99

PRO-GRIP LEATHER CRUISER GRIPS
$10.99

CHROME AND RIBBED RUBBER HANDLEBAR GRIP SET
$23.70

SOFT TOUCH GRIP SET
$19.90

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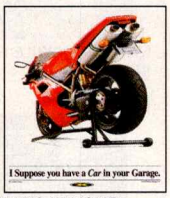
DAINESE

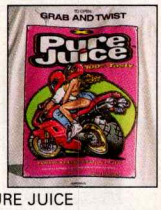
XTREME

XTREME T-SHIRTS

M-XL	$17.95
XXL	$19.95

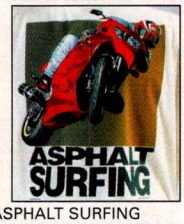


WHAT'S IN YOUR GARAGE

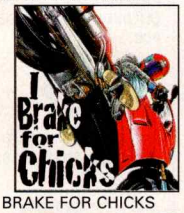


PURE JUICE

WORN KNEES



ASPHALT SURFING

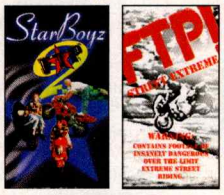


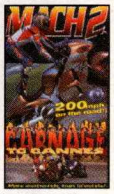
I BRAKE FOR CHICKS

ONE GOOD TURN

EENIE MEANIE

IMPACT VIDEO





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STARBOYZ	$24.95
FTP	$24.95
MACH 2	$24.95

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NELSON RIGG STORM RIDER PANT & JACKET 2 PIECE RAINSUIT

$34.99

Motion Pro

MOTION PRO CHAIN PRESS KIT

KIT $85.99

FACTORY

FACTORY PROFESSIONAL TUNING COMPONENTS

•STG 1 CARB KITS
•STG 3 CARB KITS
•IGNITION ADVANCERS
•SHIFT KITS

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DAINESE LUCE JACKET

$519.00

DAINESE TH1 JACKET

$629.00

DAINESE TRANSFORMER TEXTILE JACKET

$329.00

DAINESE TATTOO JACKET

$629.00

DAINESE IMATRA JACKET

$529.00

DAINESE FLASH 2 JACKET

$699.00

DAINESE K SUIT 1 PIECE

WHITE/RED/BLACK

$1345.96

DAINESE P103 PANTS

$399.00

DAINESE NATION DRYLINE PANTS

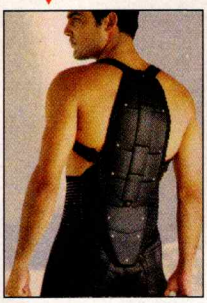
$299.00

ERGON EVO 1 PLAIN HELMET

$369.00

BACK SPACE T2

$119.00



DAINESE BACK SPACE

SPACE 1, 2, AND 3

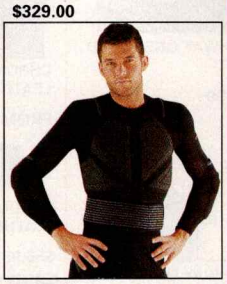
$179.00

DAINESE SAFETY JACKET AIR

$299.00

DAINESE SAFETY JACKET 20

$329.00



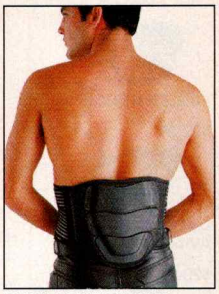
DAINESE SUMMER SAFETY JACKET

$258.00

DAINESE BACK SPACE

G1, AND G2

$73.00



DAINESE BAP 2000/3

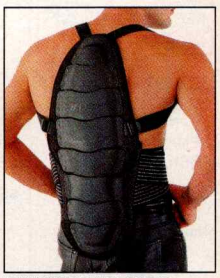
$73.00

DAINESE BAP 2000/4

$83.00

DAINESE BAP 2000/5

$84.00



DAINESE BAP 2000/8

$144.00

DAINESE BAP 2000/9

$154.00

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SADDLEBAG SUPPORT BARS

ROAD STAR $69.95
V STAR $69.95
SUZUKI $52.95

ENGINE GUARDS

ROAD STAR $99.95
V STAR FROM $91.95
VULCAN $87.95
INTRUDER $79.95

LUGGAGE RACKS

ROAD STAR $89.95
V STAR $86.95
INTRUDER LC SOLO $83.95

CHROME SIDE COVERS

SHADOW VLX $99.99
VALKYRIE $150.00
VULCAN $184.95

COVERS

VENTURE EXPNDBLE. $124.95
INTRUDER LC $118.95
V STAR $79.95

V STAR CHROME BATTERY SIDE COVERS

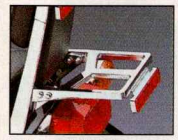
$59.95

ROAD STAR/ROYAL STAR/V STAR CHROME GRIPS

$54.95

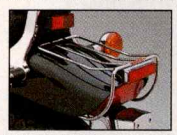
V STAR CHROME RIDER FLOORBOARDS

$159.95



REAR CARRIERS

SHADOW VLX (SQUARE) $85.00
ACE/ACE 750/ ACE TOURER (CHROME) $158.93
VALKYRIE/ VALKYRIE TOURER (CHROME) $111.00
INTRUDER $169.95



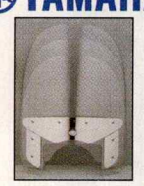
REAR FENDER RACKS

ROAD STAR $89.95
V STAR $89.95
INTRUDER $54.95
INTRUDER LC CHROME $74.95

CHROME MASTER CYLINDER COVERS

ROAD STAR $19.95
V STAR $16.95

YAMAHA



ROAD STAR SILVERADO WINDSHIELDS

TALL	$302.84
REPL.	$169.95
MEDIUM	$299.95
REPL.	$165.70
SHORT	$299.95
REPL.	$169.95
MOUNTS	$89.95

ROAD STAR/V STAR/ VENTURE BILLET HANDLEBAR CLAMP

BALL MILLED $61.95

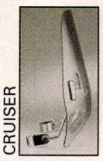
ROAD STAR/ROYAL STAR/VENTURE/V STAR BILLET MIRRORS

$99.95

HONDA

VALKYRIE/ VALKYRIE TOURER CHROME SWINGARM PIVOT COVERS

$92.95



WINDSHIELDS

SHADOW ACE 750 CRUISER $136.50
ACE DELUXE $140.99
SHADOW VLX $73.13
VALKYRIE CHROME $560.00

Kawasaki

KAWASAKI NOMAD™ STEERING HEAD COVERS

$94.95

KAWASAKI ARLEN NESS™ "ALTERNATIVES" CHROME MIRRORS

$44.95

SUZUKI

SUZUKI INTRUDER LC SOLO SEAT TRIM

$79.95

SUZUKI INTRUDER CHROME RADIATOR COVER SET

$89.95

SUZUKI INTRUDER LC CHROME FRAME COVERS

$39.95

SUZUKI INTRUDER LC CHROME BATTERY COVER

$34.95

TOUR MASTER TANK DIVIDER A.C.E.

$22.99

CRUISER BAG SISSY BAR/ TRAVELCASE

CASE/BAG
XL CLASSIC $197.99
XLRIVET $215.99
L CLASSIC $179.99
L RIVET $188.99
SISSYBAR CASE
S CLASSIC $58.99
S RIVET $62.99
TOOLBAG #305
CLASSIC $31.99
RIVET $35.99

CRUISER BAG BOX SADDLEBAG

XLCLASSIC $107.99
XLRIVET $116.99
L CLASSIC $85.99
L RIVET $89.99
M CLASSIC $71.99
M RIVET $76.99

CRUISER BAG SLANT SADDLEBAG

XLCLASSIC $134.99
XLRIVET $143.99
L CLASSIC $125.99
L RIVET $134.99
M CLASSIC $98.99
M RIVET $107.99

CHASE HARPER

CHASE HARPER BREEZE BUSTER

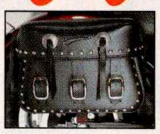
$30.99

EXCEPTIONAL QUALITY!

RETRO AVIATOR GOGGLES

$84.99

TRAVELCADE



TRAVELCADE DESPERADO RIGID MOUNT SADDLEBAG

HONDA SHADOW 1100 AND ACE 87-96
KAWASAKI VULCAN 800 95-96
SUZUKI INTRUDERS ALL 700-1400 85-96
H-D SPORTSTER 85-93
H-D SPORTSTER 94-96
H-D DYNA 91-95

$219.99

COBRA

COBRA FOOTPEGS

$82.99

COBRA LICENSE PLATE BACK

$44.99

COBRA REAR LUGGAGE RACKS

$80.99

COBRA LIGHTBARS

FROM **$179.99**

COBRA CHROMED SADDLEBAG SUPPORTS

$62.99

COBRA BILLET RISERS

FROM **$89.99**

COBRA RESERVOIR COVERS

$26.99

COBRA BILLET OIL CAPS AND DIPSTICKS

OIL FILLER CAP $22.99
OIL DIPSTICK $35.99

COBRA DRIVE SHAFT COVERS

$36.99

COBRA FREEWAY BARS

$134.99

COBRA CHROME COVERS

$36.99

COBRA SISSY BAR

MAGNA 94-00
ACE 750 99
VT1100 87-96/SPIRIT 98-00
ACE 95-98/TOURER 98-00
AERO 98-00
VS1500 INTRDR. 98-00
VULCAN 800A/B 95-00, 1500D/E 96-00,1500G
NOMAD 98-00
V-STAR 650 CLASSIC 98-00
V-STAR 1100 99-00
ROAD STAR 1600 99-00

$215.99

COBRA BOULEVARD FLOORBOARD KITS

FROM **$179.99**

COBRA CHROME BRAKE RODS

VLX600 88-00
VF750C MAGNA 94-00
ACE 750 98-00
VT1100 87-96
VULCAN 800A/B 95-00

$26.99

GRAB-ON ROAD DELUXE GRIPS

STD, LONG, AND 1 INCH

$15.99

COBRA BOULEVARD EXHAUST AVAILABLE FOR MOST YAMAHA, HONDA, KAWASAKI AND SUZUKI CRUISERS!!!

COBRA COMPLETE CLASSIC EXHAUST FOR YAMAHA ROAD STAR & V STAR 1100

LO-BOYS
STAGGER $349.99
SHOTGUN $374.99
HI-BOYS
SHOTGUN $374.99
CLASSIC
DLX SLSH $399.99

COBRA BOULEVARD SUZUKI EXHAUST

2" DRAG PIPE **$299.99**

COBRA CUSTOM TAIL LIGHTS

TOMBSTONE $35.99
BOULEVARD $35.99

COBRA BILLET LICENSE PLATE FRAMES

SM/LG COBRA
SMALL VULCAN
FROM **$31.99**

UNIVERSAL VISTA CRUISE CONTROL

FITS MOST
HON/KAW/SUZ/YAM

$25.99

national cycle

NATIONAL CYCLE HARD SIDED SADDLEBAGS

VT1100 C2 SHADOW ACE
VT1100 SHADOW/ SPIRIT
VT750 C/D ACE
VT1100 C3 AERO
GL1500C VALKYRIE
VN1500 A&L
VN800 A&B
VN1500 D/E CLASSIC
VZ800 MARAUDER
VL1500LC
XVS650 V-STAR CLASSIC
XVS650 CUSTOM
XVS1600 ROADSTAR/ WILDSTAR
XVS1100 CUSTOM

$450.96

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AGVSPORT

AGV RAGE JACKET
BLK/GRY/GUN SHOWN
REG.289.99 **SALE:$239.97**

AGV IMOLA JACKET
BLK/YEL/GUN/WHT
REG.249.99 **SALE: $209.97**

AGV SPORT 2 JACKET
WHT/BLU/BLK SHOWN
REG.229.99 **SALE: $189.97**

AGV RIDER JACKET
REG.159.99 **SALE: $129.97**

DAINESE MAX 1 JACKET
RED/BLACK
$286.99

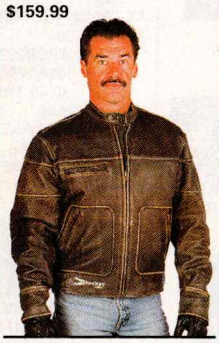
DAINESE TATTOO JACKET
BLK/WHT SHOWN
FROM $614.96

JOE ROCKET

JOE ROCKET TAHOE JACKET (MENS)
BLACK SHOWN
$309.99

JOE ROCKET BALLISTIC 3.0 JACKET
BLK/BLU/GRY SHOWN
$229.99

JOE ROCKET REFLEX JACKET
BLACK SHOWN
$159.99



JOE ROCKET V-SPORT JACKET
ANTIQUE BRN SHOWN
$389.99

DAINESE

DAINESE EYES JACKET
GREY SHOWN
$339.99

JOE ROCKET HARD DRIVE JACKET
BLACK/GOLD SHOWN
$309.99

JOE ROCKET METEOR 3.0 JACKET
BLK/ORG/WHT SHOWN
$189.99

JOE ROCKET ATOMIC JACKET
BLK/RD/WHT SHOWN
$129.99

JOE ROCKET MONTEREY JACKET
BLACK ONLY
$259.99

JOE ROCKET BLASTER JACKET
BLK/RD/WHT SHOWN
$289.99

JOE ROCKET ROCKET 88 JACKET
BLK/CHRY /CRME SHOWN
$439.99

JOE ROCKET BLASTER PANT
$239.99

JOE ROCKET BULLDOG PANT
$339.99

JOE ROCKET SONIC JACKET
BLK/CHECKER SHOWN
$289.99

JOE ROCKET SPEEDMASTER JACKET
YEL/BLK/CHRM SHOWN
$439.99

JOE ROCKET SPEEDWAY JACKET
BLACK SHOWN
$389.99

ELITE RAINSUIT
PANT- **$26.99**
JACKET- **$44.99**

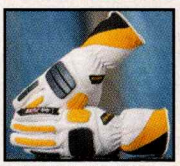
ELITE NOMEX® RAINSUIT PANT
WITH HEAT SHIELD PANELS
$49.99

JOE ROCKET BALLISTIC 3.0 (MENS) PANT
$139.99

JOE ROCKET JEAN (MENS & WOMENS) PANT
$89.99

AGV CARBON 7 PRO GLOVE
WHT/RD/ BLK SHOWN
REG. 94.99 **SALE: $79.97**

AGV PRISMA GLOVE
WHT/RD/BLK SHOWN
REG. 99.99 **SALE: $69.97**



AGV IMOLA GLOVE
WHT/YEL/GUN SHOWN
$44.99

02: AGV CORSA 2 GLOVE
BLK/PURP/YEL SHOWN
$34.99

AGV RAGE GLOVE
WHT/BLU/BLK SHOWN
REG. 27.99 **SALE: $24.97**

BUSE CARBONTEC GLOVE
BLACK/BLUE SHOWN
$189.99

JOE ROCKET V-SPORT GLOVE
BLK/CREME SHOWN
$48.99

JOE ROCKET HIGHSIDE GLOVE
YEL/BLK SHOWN
$48.99

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UNIVERSAL VISTA CRUISE

$25.99

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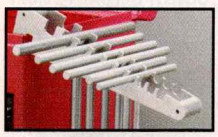

MOTION PRO T-HANDLE TOOL RACK

$24.99

T-HANDLE WRENCHES

$29.99

LP LOCKHART PHILLIPS USA

LP GLASMASK TANK TOP

FULL- **$40.99**
HALF- **$31.99**
EMBROIDERED- **$35.99**
CARBON LOOK- **$44.99**

TOUR MASTER CORTECH SADDLEBAG

BLACK
$139.99

TOUR MASTER CORTECH TAILBAG

BLACK
$76.99

TOUR MASTER NYLON SLANT SADDLEBAGS

LARGE-**$71.99**
XLARGE-**$80.99**

VANCE & HINES

VANCE & HINES IGNITION ADVANCERS

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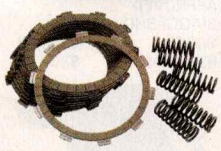

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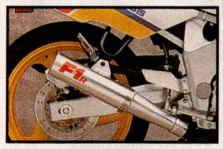

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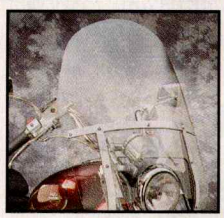

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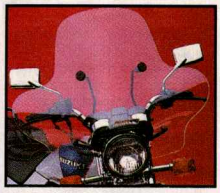

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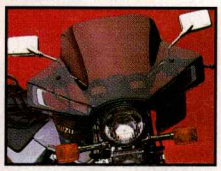

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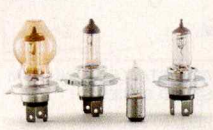

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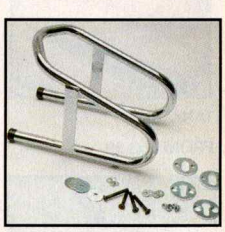

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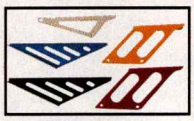

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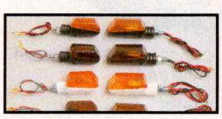

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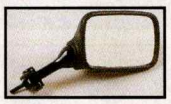

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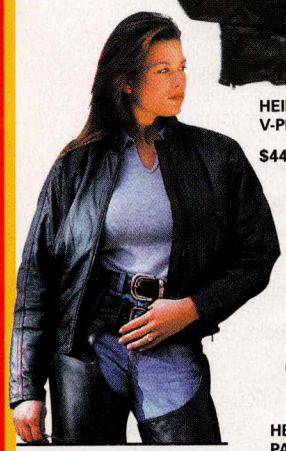

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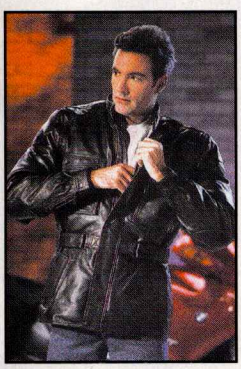

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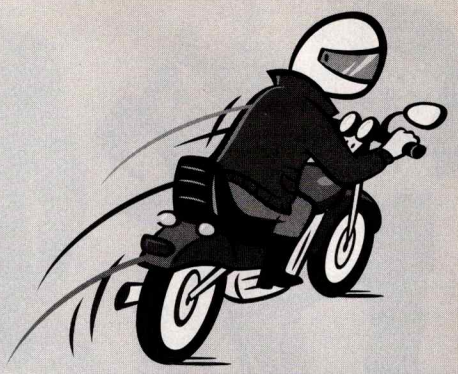

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NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. VOID WHERE PROHIBITED.

1. ELIGIBILITY: Open to legal residents of the U.S., except Puerto Rico, who are 18 years of age or older at date of entry and have a valid U.S. driver's license on or before May 1, 2001. Ford Motor Company, Speedvision Network, emap usa, Vertical Mix Marketing, Inc. and its parent, affiliates, subsidiaries, advertising and promotional agencies and each of their respective officers, directors, employees, and agents and members of the immediate family and persons living in the same household of each are ineligible.

2. TO ENTER: Between 12:00:01 AM ET, May 1, 2001 and 11:59:59 PM ET, July 24, 2001, visit www.speedvision.com and click on the "Best of Both Wheels" Sweepstakes link. Participants must enter their name, street address, city, state, zip code, day-time phone number and e-mail address to enter. You may complete your entry by clicking the "Submit" button. To enter by mail complete the official entry form, which can be found in July, 2001 and August, 2001 issues of Motorcyclist Magazine, or send a 3" x 5" post card including your name, street address, city, state, zip code, day-time phone number and e-mail address (if available) and mail to: Speedvision "Best of Both Wheels" Sweepstakes, P.O. Box 910, Newark, NY 14513-0910. By registering for this sweepstakes, participants are aware of and agree with sponsor's privacy policy located at: www.speedvision.com/privacy.html. Sponsor is not responsible for malfunctions of electronic equipment, computer hardware or software, or lost, late, incomplete illegible, damaged or misdirected entries. Sponsor is not responsible for problems downloading entries from the web site or for any other technical problems related to web site entries or failure to distribute questions. Limit one entry per person or e-mail address. Sponsor reserves the right to modify, suspend or terminate the on-line portion of this Sweepstakes in the event that it becomes infected by a computer virus or is otherwise technically impaired. In the event of a dispute regarding the identity of the person submitting an online entry, the entry will be deemed to be submitted by the person in whose name the e-mail account is registered. Entries become the property of Sponsor and will not be returned.

3. DRAWING: Winners will be selected on or about July 31, 2001 from all eligible entries received, in a random drawing conducted by Vertical Mix Marketing, Inc., an independent judging organization, whose decisions are final on all matters relating to the sweepstakes. Each winner will be notified by express mail and/or phone and will be required to sign and return an Affidavit of Eligibility and Release from Liability ("Release") which must be received by Sponsor within 10 days of notification or prize will be forfeited and an alternate winner selected. Return of any prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification and selection of an alternate winner.

4. PRIZES AND ODDS OF WINNING: One (1) Grand Prize: Ford Harley-Davidson F-150 SuperCrew truck and Harley-Davidson® FXDL Dyna Low Rider® motorcycle; (Estimated Retail Value: $49,590). Ten (10) First Prizes: One year subscription to Motorcyclist Magazine and a Speedvision merchandise prize pack; (Estimated Retail Value: $40 each). Winner is responsible for vehicle registration, license, taxes and insurance. Winner must provide a valid drivers license and satisfactory proof of insurance at time of delivery. Winner is responsible for all taxes and expenses, including but not limited to: sales tax, luxury tax, destination charges, registration, title and license fees, insurance, and all other costs incurred in claiming, registering or using the vehicle. Winner is responsible for all costs associated with any upgrade/option packages. All prizes will be awarded. Prizes are not transferable. No prize substitutions or cash redemptions allowed, except at the Sponsor's sole discretion if the advertised prize becomes unavailable. Limit one prize per person/household. Odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received.

5. GENERAL: Sweepstakes is governed by the laws of the United States, with venue in Connecticut and all claims must be resolved in the courts of Connecticut. By entering, entrants agree: (1) to release Sponsor and its agents from all liability, loss or damage arising out of their participation in the Sweepstakes and with respect to their acceptance and use of the prizes; (2) to be bound by the Official Rules; (3) that the decisions of the judge are final and binding on all matters relating to the Sweepstakes; and (4) to the use of their names and likenesses for advertising and promotional purposes in all media worldwide (including online) without additional compensation, except in TN and where otherwise prohibited by law. All applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations apply. Winners are responsible for all federal, state and local taxes. All winners will be issued 1099 tax forms for the ERV of their prizes exceeding $600.

6. WINNERS' LIST: For a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be postmarked by July 31, 2001 and received by August 7, 2001, to: SPEEDVISION "BEST OF BOTH WHEELS" SWEEPSTAKES, Winner's List, 2 Park Avenue, 14th Floor, NY, NY 10016.

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TEAR-OFFS

continued from page 34

bumper sticker through the National Motorists Association that says, "Sun's up, lights off, thank you," by calling (800) 773-3387 or by visiting the group's Web site: www.motorists.org.

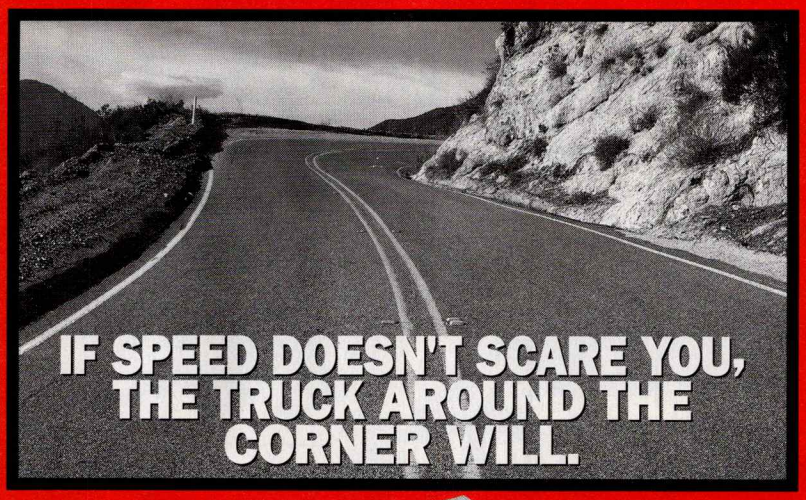
■ When one thinks of Italian motorcycles, one usually thinks of that heavily Italian region of the United States named Wisconsin. So, it's no surprise that Ducati Corse chose Saukville, just north of Milwaukee, for the world's first Ducati Corse Café and Motorcycle Shop. **The all-Italian store will sell Ducati, MV Augusta, Aprilia, Cagiva and Italian-owned Husqvarna supermotards**, and function as the headquarters for Ducati's American Motorcyclist Association (AMA) Superbike squad: HMC Ducati Racing. Indoor and outdoor dining will also be provided, as well as a motorcycle museum, a race shop with glass walls so visitors can watch mechanics prep racebikes and a bunch of other cool stuff. Check it out on the Web at www.corsesuperbikes.com.

■ Attention Aprilia owners: Get thee to a track asap. **The Italian manufacturer has announced its 2001 schedule of Aprilia-sponsored track days**, but owners of less-spicy sporting tackle are encouraged to report, also. And if you're thinking about switching (don't tell your Ducati), there will be Milles and SL Falcos on hand for test rides. By the time you read this, most of the East Coast dates will have already passed, but there is still a plethora of West Coast dates on the horizon. Registration for Aprilia owners is $145, but non-Aprilia owners will have to cough up $185. Call (877) 277-4542 or visit www.apriliausa.com for more info.

Aprilia-sponsored 2001 track dates:

May 21	Carolina Motorsports Park, Kershaw, SC
June 11	Willow Springs Raceway Rosamond, CA
June 12	Willow Springs Raceway Rosamond, CA
June 26	Thunderhill Raceway Willows, CA
June 27	Thunderhill Raceway Willows, CA
June 28	Thunderhill Raceway Willows, CA
July 16	Gingerman Raceway South Haven, MI

■ Bad news, folks. **Motorcycle deaths are on the rise in the United States.** According to the latest federal estimates for the year 2000, there were 208 more motorcycle deaths in 2000 than in 1999, bringing the total for the year to 2680. Overall, motorcycle deaths have increased 27 percent in the last three years.



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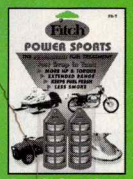

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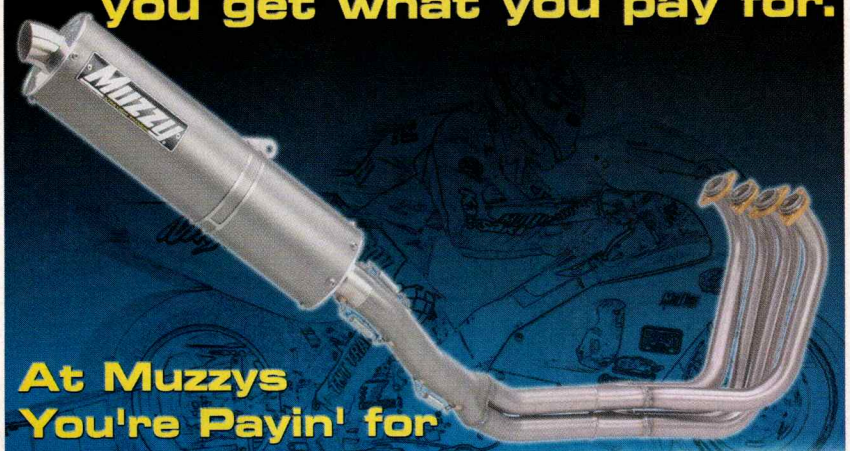

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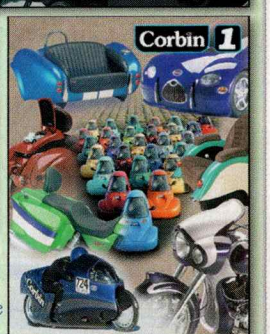

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TEAR-OFFS

Officials say there is no single cause that stands out, but rather a number of causes, including a steady rise in both the age of people riding motorcycles, as well as the engine size of bikes involved in crashes. According to the Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF), a lot of older riders are getting back into the sport after decades of not riding, and are eschewing training courses. "We are trying to get the word out to them to get some retraining," said Steffanie Gunn of the MSF. "It's not like riding a bicycle."

■ **The rumor mill is already beginning to crank out info about Yamaha's 2002 YZF-R1.** Because Honda's 929 is generally considered to handle better and Suzuki's GSX-R1000 is more powerful by a wide margin, it's clear the R1 is no longer *el numero uno* and that Yamaha would like to reclaim the "It Bike" throne in 2002. The most obvious improvements the company could make to the R1 are fuel injection and ram air, but there is also speculation that the new R1 could be fitted with a semiautomatic, thumb-operated shifting mechanism. Sister pub *Motor Cycle News* in the United Kingdom quotes a "Yamaha insider" as saying, "During tests, it has been found you can get significantly more power from the R1 engine, while there have been problems trying to increase the GSX-R1000's output. There is plenty of life left in the R1 motor." We love industry insiders talking smack about their opponents.

■ Speaking of the rumor mill, **BMW is reported to be working on an übersecret Superbike.** Yes, *super*bike, as in a "No More Mr. Nice Guy" bike. Word is BMW is looking at several options to provide forward motion for its world-beater: either a 1000cc flat twin, or a similarly sized flat-four. Styling is rumored to be somewhat like the R1100S, but much more sporty—the whole nine yards. Whether this bike shows up in the near future is anyone's guess, because BMW created a superbike in the early 1990s named the R1 (ironic, no?), which never entered production.

■ Is the Gold Wing too much bike for ya? Well then, move to Europe and pick up one of **Honda's new 600cc Silver Wing scooters.** Large-displacement scooters are as popular overseas as fried food is here in the States, and Honda hopes to sell 3000 of them next year for $6125 each. Yamaha launched its own 500cc scooter last year dubbed the Tmax, so we think it would be only appropriate for Honda to name its scooter the T-Rex. Naturally, this would also involve a paint scheme with giant teeth by the headlights and little arms on the side of the fairing. We smell a *Jurassic Park XIV* tie-in.

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gear box

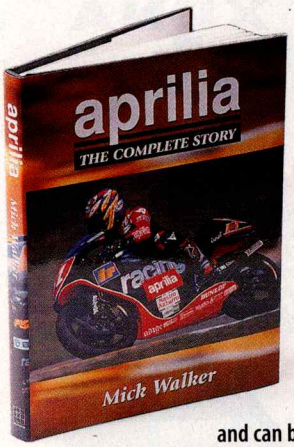
Compiled By Josh Norem. Photos By James Brown

Bagadelic Baby! Yeah!

We've never been sure whether to call this company "Mar-say" or "Marcy," but we've known for a long time that the company's motorcycle storage products are awesome. One recent innovation is the travel bag, which is basically a small storage bag named the Travel Kit. Its exterior is fashioned from ballistic nylon and is waterproof. On the sides are two small pockets coated with reflective logos. It can also become a snazzy bag for use under the seat or in a saddlebag. The Travel Kit is $40, and can be had by calling Marsee at (800) 293-2400, or for more information check out www.marseeproducts.com.

Speed Reading

Who is this Troy Corser character, and, more importantly, what in the heck is a company that makes scooters doing winning World Superbike races? Yes, we know it's very confusing, but it's all explained in Mick Walker's telling of the company's past, present and future. *Aprilia: The Complete History* is a well-written tome of the young upstart called Aprilia. Get it for more info or if you just want to have a fancy coffee-table book. It costs $35.95 (hardback), and can be ordered through their U.S. carrier at (800) 826-6600; www.motorbooks.com.



Tool Time

Tools: What man ever has enough? The Watson Tool Card packs 14 miniature tools into a plastic sheath the size of a (large) credit card ($29.95). There's a tape measure, toothpick, tweezers and several snap-on attachments for tools that require leverage. The edge is a ruler, and it even has a pen for jotting down the phone numbers of the Bettys you meet on the road. The card can be purchased by calling (800) 213-4561 or online at www.topeak.com.

Mmmmm...Tasty Nuts

You've swapped out your bike's exhaust, brake lines, windscreen and seat for aftermarket units—so what's next? How about replacing all of the bolts on your bike? It'll all be worth it when your blue R1 has blue bolts surrounding the gas cap or windscreen. Tasty Nuts offers replacement screws and bolts for practically every nonstructural purpose: engine, windscreen, fairing, gas tank, mud guards and more. All nuts are guaranteed to be tasty and billet-machined to a smooth finish. Choose black, blue, gold, green, purple, red or silver, but you'll have to call the United Kingdom at 01144 1242 584447 for more information on how to get them. Or you can surf to www.tastynuts.com.

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U-S-A, U-S-A! Sorry, but we love to root for our motorcycling heroes. You do too? Well, then pick up a T-shirt featuring your favorite Arai-shod roadracer ($19.99). Made of 100 percent preshrunk cotton, the T-shirts feature a helmet logo on the front, and a bold, adrenaline-pumping design on the back. (We should be ad copywriters, no?) Perfect for race day, or any day. Arai also offers logo T-shirts, sweaters, coffee mugs, polo shirts and hats. Call (800) 299-9651 or visit www.pilotusa.com on the Web.

Bear With Us

The Franklin Mint has exquisitely crafted a replica Harley-Davidson rider, complete with accurate body-hair allowance. Named "Tiny," this 14-inch-tall teddy bear sports a chain wallet, tattoo, bandanna, beer gut and, according to its maker, is "bear chested." And we thought Boehm's jokes were bad. The Franklin Mint also boasts that Tiny's eyes are "sparkling with mischief," but we think that's taking things a bit too far. Get one of these $135 cuties by contacting your local Harley-Davidson dealer or by calling the Franklin Mint at (877) 843-6468. The company can also be reached at www.franklinmint.com.

mc tested:

Joe Rocket Speedmaster Gloves

Our review of the Joe Rocket Speedmaster Gloves can be summed up in one word: wow. These gloves are heaven for your hands, thanks to the use of Kangaroo skin on the palm and tanned cowhide on top, molded air vents on the fingers and wrists, and copious amounts of padding all over the place. But wait...there's more! The seams are externally sewn, so they won't fray and irritate your digits, and the Joe Rocket logo on the wrist is reflective. All in all, the Speedmaster Gloves are well-made, comfortable, sensitive to the palms and provide protection for the upper hand. Bravo Rocketmen.

PRICE: $149.95
RATING: ★★★★★
VERDICT: *High levels of comfort and protection, and a fantastic build quality.*

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Common motorcycle logic dictates that it's always cool to resemble people who are faster than you. The most obvious ploy is to wear a race-

replica helmet, but everyone can get one of those—only true racers have factory tires. Now you can have works rubber, too—sort of. For a limited time, when you buy a set of Dunlop tires, the company will send you a set of free rub-on works stickers, transforming your over-the-shelf skins into factory rubber in only a few minutes. After purchasing said tires, send a copy of your receipt plus an S.A.S.E. to: Dunlop Tires North America, Attention: Motorcycle Works Decal, P.O. Box 1109, Buffalo, NY 14240-1109.

Crystal-Glo Acrylic Motorcycle Polish

mc tested:

To say we were impressed with the results of our initial "wax on, wax off" Crystal-Glo testing would be a severe understatement. This stuff is absolutely amazing. It transformed Burns's long-term R6 from a dust-caked embarrassment into a shiny, just-rolled-off-the-showroom-floor-looking bike in minutes. The secret sauce in the polish is an acrylic base that gives off a shiny, "wet" look, which also protects your bike's surface from UV rays, scratches and any other unwanted debris. We even applied it to some old junkers and, lo and behold, they looked halfway decent again. The best part is two weeks after application, the bikes with Crystal-Glo still looked bright and shiny.

PRICE: $10.95
RATING: ★★★★★
VERDICT: *Amazing polish that makes any bike look like new in minutes—really.*

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Pipe Dreams

An unwritten rule of motorcycling declares that all V-twin motorcycles shall be fitted with aftermarket exhausts. (Don't look at us, we didn't write it.) To that end, the lads at HMF Engineering have crafted some divine high-mount carbon-fiber pipes for Honda's RC51. The pipes use four-inch round carbon-fiber canisters bolted to impeccably welded brackets. They require the removal of the passenger pegs, but who would want to ride on the back of an RC51 fer chrissakes? The turn signals also need to be replaced by flush-mount units, which are not included. The high-mount pipes cost $700–$800, and the low-mount jobbers are $659. Give 'em a ring at (216) 631-6980 or punch www.hmfengineering.com into your browser for more information.

Ballistic Boy

We called this magazine "America's Favorite Buff Book" in May, and this photo proves it. Our co-worker Jim is looking exceedingly tough in his Joe Rocket Meteor Jacket, and for good reason—this jacket is swank. It's got removable armor, a spine pad, an eight-inch zipper in back for connecting pants, reflective striping and 100 percent waterproof construction. The Meteor will leave a $199.95 hole in your wallet. Find your local Joe Rocket dealer by calling (800) 635-6103, or visit Joe on the Web at www.joerocket.com. MC

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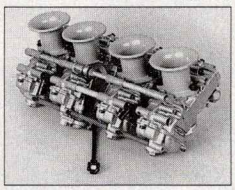
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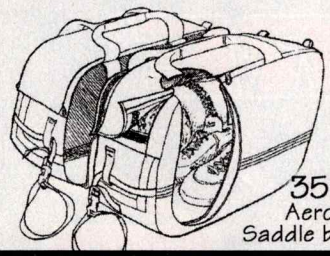
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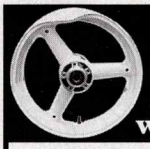
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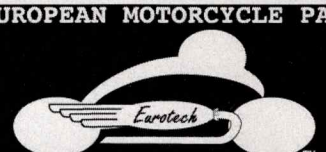

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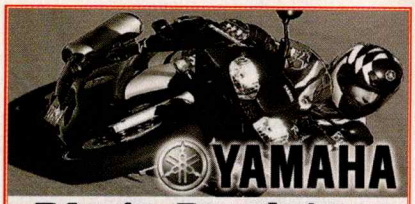

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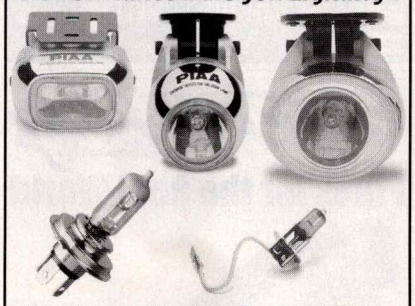
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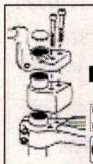

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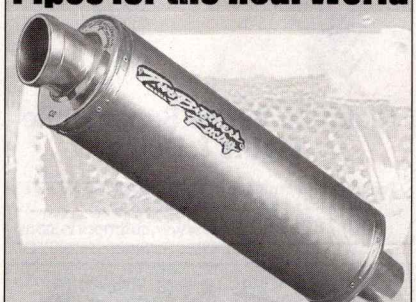

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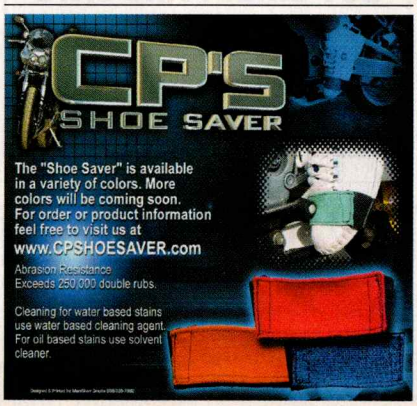

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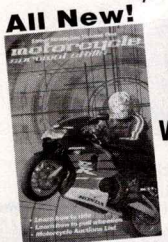

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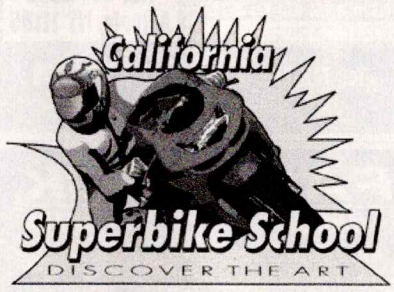

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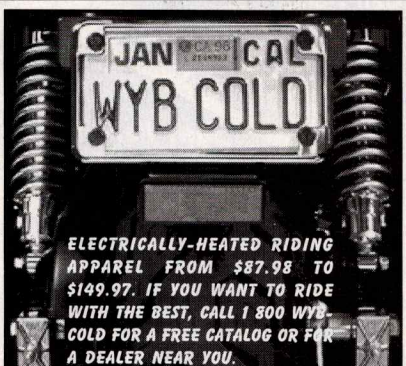

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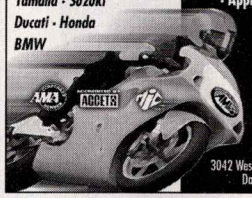

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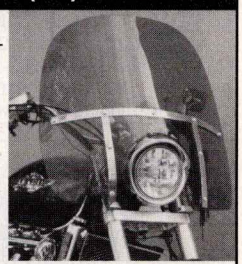

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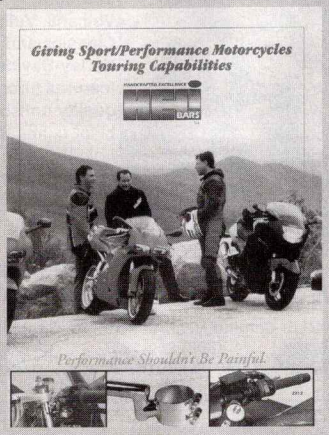

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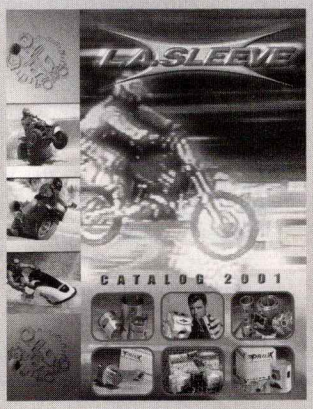

L.A. SLEEVE's stylish 2001 catalog is a great resource for motorcyclists interested in rebuilding, racing or recreational riding. **(Free)**

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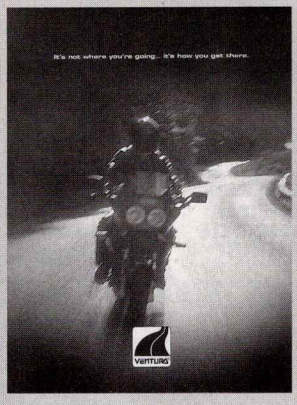

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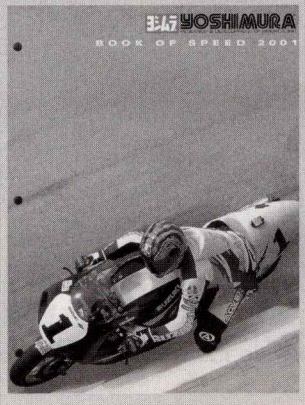

YOSHIMURA's catalog provides a pictorial racing history with details of its exhaust systems, slip-ons and street/off-road applications for your motorcycle. **($5)**

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tion that's backed up is to lane-split (slowly) to the front of the line...." Slowly or not, this is illegal in many states and also gets motorists very angry. Perhaps his near demise might incline him to use a little patience.

Barac Wimberly
St. Petersburg, FL

"Dangerous and illegal activity?" Please. *Aside from my admission that I was in a hurry and going a bit too quickly for conditions (the whole point of the story—what* not *to do...get it?), consider this: The practice of lane-sharing isn't only not illegal here in California, it's also a helluva lot safer—when done prudently—than being "patient" and getting crushed by a 7000-pound SUV driven by a phone-talking/makeup-applying/newspaper-reading dork while you wait at a stoplight in a long line of cars. Open your eyes the next time you're in traffic. By the way, lane-sharing is not only permitted in Europe, Japan and many other parts of Asia, but also encouraged. Remember, the bias against lane-splitting really only exists in this country; many countries recognize that motorcycles are a valuable remedy for congestion. If it angers other motorists to see someone being smarter than they, with regard to the difficulties of big-city commuting, tough sh*t. That's their problem, not mine.—Ed.*

THE FOUR-YEAR ITCH

I am considering purchasing a 2001 VFR800F, but I'm curious: As the current-generation VFR has been around for four years now, do you think Honda will change the bike for next year—or even the year after that? I don't want to be like the guy that bought a 900RR and then a few weeks later the 929RR came out for the same price.

Justin Roberts
Via e-mail

If you're looking for the latest stuff, we'd wait. The VFR and Super Hawk, which have been in production for four and five years, respectively, are due for major revamps, though it seems Honda may have put aside its "four-year" rule (which had seen new VFRs every four years since the bike's inception) for now due to its recent emphasis on other projects—a new Gold Wing and all-new VTX, for instance. We expect to see a reworked VTR in 2002, and a similarly new VFR in '03. But you never know....—Ed.

We appreciate your views and opinions. Send letters to BACKFIRES, *Motorcyclist*, 6420 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90048-5515, or fax them to (323) 782-2372. If you have Internet access, you can e-mail your thoughts to us at mcmail@emapusa.com. Letters must be signed and include your address and telephone number; however, we will withhold your name at your request. We reserve the right to edit letters for clarity and/or length. The views expressed here are not necessarily those of *Motorcyclist*. All materials sent to the editors will become the property of *Motorcyclist* and cannot be returned.

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Robin Olson

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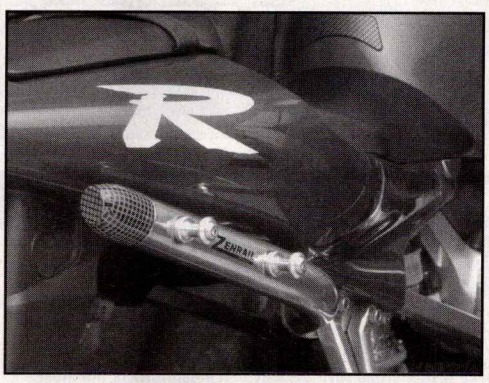

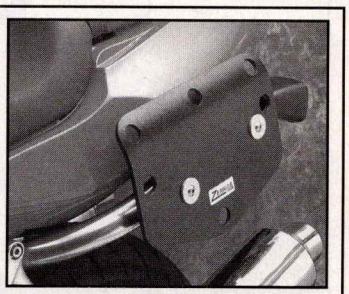

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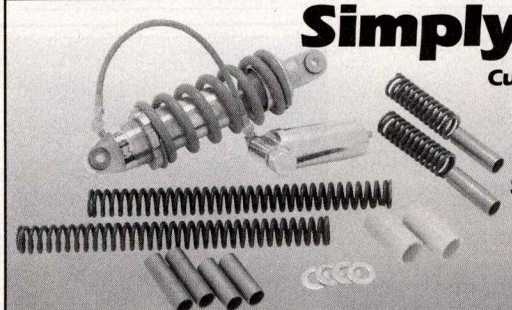

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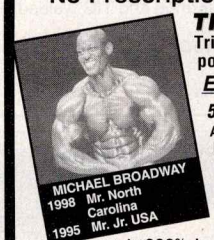

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Edited By Marc Cook

INDUSTRY INSIDER

Thirteen Things You Didn't Know About:
Motorcycle Windshields

Ann Willey, of National Cycle, one of the country's oldest manufacturers of motorcycle windshields and replacement windscreens, says she's fielded scores of inquiries about plastic windshields. Here she gives you the inside line on what's what in the world of screens.

Not all motorcycle windscreens are created equal. A great part of this is due to the raw materials used and how they are fabricated. In fact, the windshield you buy or the one already on your bike could be made out of any of three distinctly different materials: regular acrylic, high-impact acrylic or a polycarbonate, most often known by its trade name, Lexan. Which material your screen is made from will depend on the manufacturer and applications (how large is it, will it have holes drilled in it?), plus other factors such as price.

Acrylic windshields are usually the least expensive because they are made from the cheapest material. Acrylic has some good properties. Excellent clarity, for example. This clarity stems from the raw materials, of course, but in the finished product the clarity is dependent on fabrication techniques. Acrylic can be cut and formed from sheet or poured into a mold to create a specific shape. (Unfortunately, this molding process often creates optical aberrations.) And, as mentioned, acrylic is inexpensive. But acrylic is also brittle, making it more dangerous in a crash—this is why all original-equipment manufacturers use polycarbonate windshields and why this material is in most of our windshields. Also, drilling acrylic creates stress in the material that will eventually lead to cracks.

Another type of acrylic is known as high-impact acrylic. Because high-impact acrylic has breaking resistance almost six times higher than plain acrylic, it has become a popular material for smaller shields as well as for applications where price is a main consideration. For instance, using high-impact acrylic may result in a $129 windshield while the same design might be $179 in Lexan.

National Cycle's Ann Willey discusses windshields

By far the best material for windshields, in my opinion, is polycarbonate, or Lexan. Polycarbonate is 22 times more resistant to cracking than acrylic. But more to the point, the right Lexan for a motorcycle is also hard-coated. The majority of the windshields we make are hard-coated. Here's the trade-off: Lexan is a significantly softer and more flexible material and, as a result, it's easier to work with from the manufacturing side and safer because it doesn't shatter in the same way acrylic does. (Acrylic tends to break into large shards.) Lexan can be drilled without risking the inherent stress-cracking of acrylic.

But Lexan's inherent "softness" also means that it is prone to scratching much more easily than acrylic. In fact, if you take a plain Lexan windshield and ride with it, you'll soon have all manner of pits and scratches. For our windshields, we use something called Lexan FMR polycarbonate, a product of General Electric. This subspecies of Lexan has a hard outer coating to help resist scratching.

Whether your windshield is made of hard-coated Lexan or either form of acrylic, you'll need to take care in maintaining it. I'm asked all the time how you should clean a plastic windshield. For light cleaning and polishing, we recommend any good plastic polisher. (Here we use products from Meguiars, Novus and Plexus.) If you're starting with a really dirty windshield—full of grime and bug remains—we prefer that you use warm water with common dishwashing soap applied by hand. (Don't forget to take off your rings first.) Use plenty of water to rinse the junk from the windshield and prevent it from being ground into the plastic. Please don't use dirty old rags or even those seemingly supple towels from the Holiday Inn; soft flannel towels are good and I also like a wet, softened chamois. And never use a razor blade to scrape those bug carcasses from the shield.

If you have considerable bug residue or tar to remove, use turpentine or Naphtha. Later, I'm going to tell you to keep any kind of petroleum product—that includes gasoline, of course—away from your windshield, but these two very mild solvents are the exceptions. Use them sparingly and rinse thoroughly with water afterward. Do yourself a favor and avoid cleaning a plastic windshield with anything containing alcohol or ammonia.

Watch out for fuel spills. Even a slight splash on the windshield while you're refilling can discolor and distort the plastic. I've seen cases where you have a few minutes to wash it off—again, with plain water—and I've also witnessed some petroleum-based fluids begin to craze the plastic as soon as they're applied. With all the additives in gasoline these days, it's hard to know just how much time you've got.

Be cautious of certain motorcycle covers. Here's the problem: Some of the really cheap covers—and I've heard of riders using old shower curtains as covers—have plasticizers that can attack Lexan and acrylic, and by trapping the fumes under the cover, you're just making the situation worse.

Consider carefully whether you really want to polish out that scratch. Sometimes the cure is worse than the ailment, because the act of polishing, if done improperly, can lead to serious optical distortions and disruption of the hardened outer coating. Then you'll have a screen that makes you sick to look through and will also scratch really easily. Better to blend the edges of the crack with a chamois and fine jeweler's rouge. Hand-rubbing is preferable to using a power buffer, because even hardened plastic windscreens are still pretty soft.

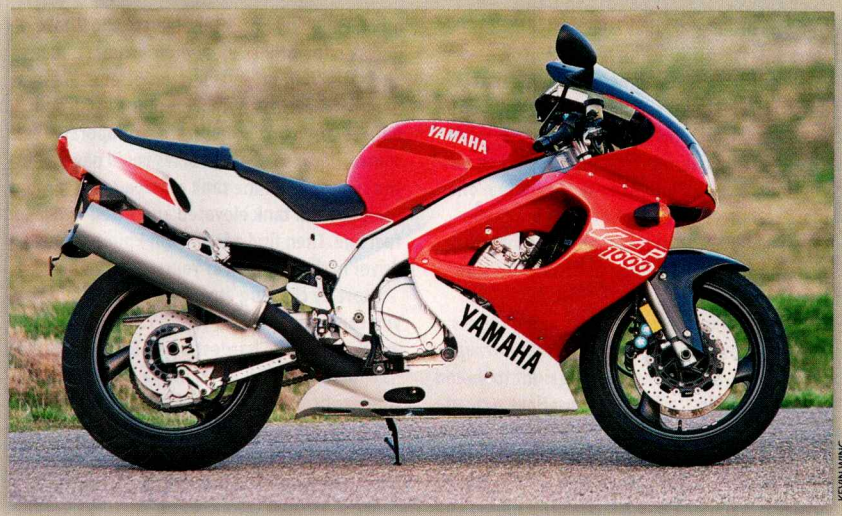
Trimming a shield is easy, but be sure you know exactly how much before you start. I recommend that riders mark a line with a grease pencil or china marker on the windshield at the height they think will be desirable and ride around for a couple of days, trying to imagine how the shield will look at the lesser height. Then, remove the shield from the bike, support it carefully and cover the adjoining areas to keep from scratching them. Take the shield to your nearest band saw. I don't recommend that you use a jig saw or sabre saw. A good band saw, with a 10-teeth-per-inch blade is the best for cutting large sections. If you're trimming just an inch or two, run the plastic against a flat-belt sander with 60- or 80-grit paper. Trim slowly and when you're done check the edges for inclusions. Cut a very slight chamfer and file the edges smooth, then polish with jeweler's rouge. Many places that cut glass will do this service for you.

Use common sense when mounting a screen. In general, the more the screen is cantilevered off the bike, the more likely it is to wobble and vibrate, which then makes it more subject to cracking. (You can stop-drill a crack, but be sure to use a bit that is large enough to completely cover the end of the crack.) Also, be sure the mounting hardware is tightened properly and that—in the case of fork-mounted windscreens—the clamps have a good hold of the fork tubes. Check for interference with cables and make sure you can turn the bar from lock to lock without restriction.

You can fix helmet buffeting with small changes in mounting position. Try changing the rake or angle of the shield vertically; often, straightening the shield will change the air flow enough to eliminate or reduce buffeting. Also, try lifting the windshield slightly off the headlight shell. The air admitted through this gap can smooth the flow behind the shield, resulting in a quieter, more comfortable ride. —*Ann Willey*

Smart Money

YAMAHA YZF1000R, 1997



KEVIN WING

- **Cheer:** Godzilla-class muscle with better road manners than Barney
- **Jeer:** It weighs a quarter-ton
- **Maintenance Watch:** Oil consumption; weak clutches; inoperative EXUP valve
- **Verdict:** So it's big-boned? Our emeritus World's Best Sportbike still runs with the big dogs for a lot less cash
- **Price:** $6275 ('97)

IN 1997 THE YZF1000R WAS THE BEST SPORTBIKE in the world. *Motorcyclist*'s October issue said so. A year later, Yamaha introduced the sporty bike equivalent of cold fusion, called it the R1, and cast the ruler of the liter-bike roost into obsolescence—so conspicuous consumers would lead you to believe. The good news is (for those of us who can't or won't round up the $10,000-plus currently necessary for superbike ownership) a YZF1000R is an impenitent alternative for a little more than half the money.

Barstool prognosticators dismiss the 506-pound (wet) YZF as pathologically obese. But its horsepower numbers carry more weight: 78.3 foot-pounds of torque at 8500 rpm, capped off with 128.0 horsepower at 10,000 rpm. That's like telling Godzilla those leathers make his butt look big. If you don't mind a little road-hugging weight, the YZF1000R is an honest alternative to current front-line sportbikes.

Shim-under-bucket valve adjustment means the cams come out every 26,000 miles to check the 20 little valves. Otherwise, aside from a few chronic glitches, the YZF is an unproblematic lump. The most common is an appetite for oil when the tach needle hangs around above 8000 rpm. Using a higher viscosity than the standard 10w-40 can cut consumption. Check higher mileage examples for oil seepage, especially around the water pump. An incontinent valve can be part of the oil-consumption equation on high-mileage examples, as are leaky piston rings. Prescribe a competent leak-down test for any candidate. The YZF carries the same bad DNA that wrecked FZR1000 clutch baskets under combat conditions; so you should investigate sour engine noises with that in mind. Even if the engine sounds fine, sliding in a heavy-duty billet replacement basket from Falicon or some other purveyor of racing parts is sound prophylactic policy.

...aside from a few chronic glitches, the YZF is an unproblematic lump.

Slow-speed jetting was generally lean from the factory, but some careful tuning usually cures indigestion. Carb synchronization and float levels were often hit and miss, also. Moving downstream, spasmodic power may be symptoms of a dysfunctional EXUP exhaust valve. A complete exhaust system and jet kit boosts peak power, but noise goes up, and excising the EXUP takes a bite out of the lower-end grunt. A good, quiet slip-on muffler can add bottom-end power and costs less money. The YZF's headlights don't blow a big enough hole in the darkness for any sort of frisky after-dark activities, so something stouter than the standard 60/55-watt bulbs may be advisable. Beyond that, the bike leaves little to complain about.

Technology waits for no one—not even Godzilla. Although the 1000R's reign lasted only a year, Yamaha sold enough to make finding a good used one reasonably easy. —*Tim Carrithers*

In Sync

HOW-TO

Get your carburetors in agreement, and your bike'll run better

SUDDENLY, YOUR BIKE RUNS LIKE HELL. IT'S HARD to start, idles erratically and feels down on power. What you need is a good sync, a carb sync that is. What's that? On multicylinder bikes with separate carburetors (or fuel-injection throttle bodies), all carbs need to be doing their fair share and operating in tight lockstep with one another. When one or more carburetors gets out of line, some cylinders will be receiving more air and fuel than the others, causing uneven idling and, possibly, surging at cruising speeds.

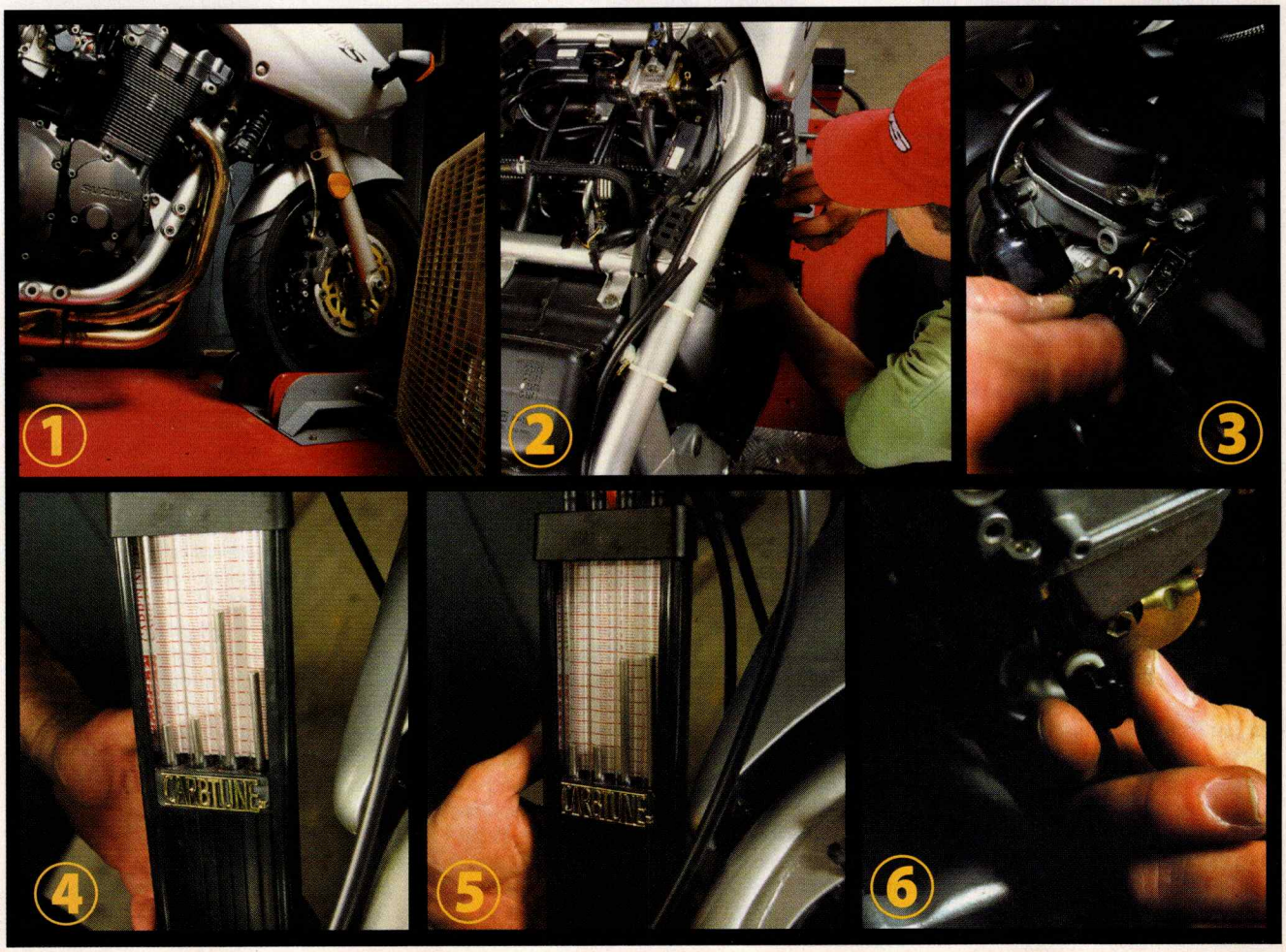
Maintenance technicians take training classes in the art of carb syncing, but it's a pretty straightforward exercise requiring only the right tools and some patience. First, a few cautions: Have a clean, well-lit workspace with good ventilation; you'll be running the engine during syncing so don't close yourself in the garage. Also, you'll need a reasonably powerful fan to help keep the engine cool (1); a lot of shadetree wrenches do without, but if the engine overheats your settings won't be right.

About those tools: You'll need a carb balancer, of course. Several types are available, including some inexpensive mercury manometers (tall glass or plastic tubes attached to a reservoir of mercury on one end and hoses that lead to the intake ports on the other), individual vacuum gauges and spiffy (but pricey) electronic items. We happened to have the purely mechanical Carbtune on hand. Plan to buy or fabricate a temporary fuel source, because on most bikes you'll have to do the syncing with the tank removed. You can also use the stock tank elevated and fitted with a long fuel line. Then find a long, thin Phillips screwdriver in that toolbox of yours.

Start by clearing away as much bodywork as you can to gain access to the carbs (2). (Don't worry, this is the hardest part.) Some bikes will have screws filling ports in the intake tract—the most common size is 5mm, but some Yamahas use 6mm threads. Make sure your balancer has the right adapters. Still other bikes have nipples on the intake tubes, like the Bandit shown here (3). Remove any lines or covers and attach the carb balancer lines, keeping track of the order—left-most cylinder to the left-most tube, and so on. Check to make sure the hoses don't get in the way of the throttle linkages or cables. See if the idle-mixture fuel (or air) screws are exposed and double-check that they're set correctly and equally.

With the temporary fuel supply attached, start the engine and let it warm up. Resist the temptation to blip the throttle because the spike in manifold vacuum can draw the mercury out of the balancer. Look down between the carbs and you'll see a small screw head near the common throttle shaft. There are three of these on a typical four-cylinder bike to set the relationship of the adjoining carbs. Begin by adjusting the screw between the number-one and number-two cylinders to match the readings on the balancer (4). Normally, the spec says to get them within 0.5 to 1.0 in. of Hg of each other but there's nothing wrong with setting them dead even. Gently blip the throttle to make sure the linkage has taken a set and check the balancer. Next, move to the number-three and number-four pair and balance them (5). Finally, use the center adjustment to synchronize the left and right pairs. By now, you may have to reset the idle speed (6). Don't be surprised if you have to go back and slightly tweak the settings one more time.

As a final test, run the engine up to a low cruising rpm and see how the vacuum signals compare. (If they're way off now but fairly equal at idle, you may have a sticky slide, sloppy linkages or some other malady—and syncing won't help.) Shut off the engine, remove the test gear and button it up, being careful to secure the manifold plugs and fuel connections.



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- *MSRP:* **$14,190 (2000 model)**
- *Miles:* **7600–9000**
- *Average Fuel Mileage:* **44 mpg**
- *Modifications:* **BMW System Cases, DP Brakes HH+ brake pads, Givi windshield and small tail trunk, Penske shocks, replacement handlebar, Two Brothers full exhaust**

LET'S GET THIS OUT OF THE WAY, THEN. SINCE WE ADMITTED that our long-term R1150GS needed an engine replacement at about 6500 miles, our e-mail system has been swimming in, shall we say, virtual vitriol. We've been called criminally negligent, absurdly stupid and generally bad caretakers of a fine motorcycle. And those are the sympathetic missives.

The short version of an ugly story is that I lent the bike out for use as a chase vehicle for a major big-bore shootout we did earlier in the year. It came back a few days later and our ever-vigilant shop foreman, Denny Ladner, noticed the oil level was low—the level was *just* below the window. This GS has always liked a bit of oil now and then, which is totally within the norm for Oilhead boxers. Not thinking much of this, Denny rode the bike to the BMW press-fleet center and commented to me afterward that it was running poorly. I dismissed this as simply the bike needing its 6000-mile service. Then BMW called and said one cylinder was scored and the connecting rod was blued, indicating heat damage. The BMW techs couldn't find evidence of a pre-existing manufacturing flaw (though by this point such evidence is hard to find among the rubble) and so the working theory became that the bike had been run low on oil, oil pressure was lost and the damage was done. It was also the techs' belief, by looking at the motorcycle, that it had not been subjected to serial abuse. (Despite what some of our kinder readers have suggested.)

So the decision was made by BMW to replace the engine. Does this mean you can buy a BMW, run it out of oil, and the company will keep putting fresh engines in? Of course not. Does it mean BMW will give the owner the benefit of the doubt? Maybe. Much depends on your relationship with your dealer, the service-writer's experience and other variables. This is a dankly gray area and we recommend you avoid it by paying obsessive attention to the oil level. (Is it churlish of us to suggest that, with a single exception, *not one* of the Japanese motorcycles we have around needs anything like this kind of oil-level interest even with serial abuse?)

However, closing on a sour note would be a massive disservice to the GS. In its year here, it has gained many fans for its do-everything personality and superlative build quality. We've tried a number of aftermarket bits—look for a full rundown next month in Streetbike Surgery—and have found incremental improvements but nothing earth-shattering. That's an indication of the bike's basic goodness. It's noteworthy that we never considered replacing the stock seat—after swapping the factory "low" seat for the standard item early in the term—and never needed to replace the Bridgestone Trail Wing radial tires, though the rear is getting a bit square and ultimate grip is a bit off.

Over the 9000 miles the GS has been in our keep, it's traveled all over California and made more trips up and down the San Diego Freeway than we can count. It has pushed into 30-mph headwinds and still managed to do 100 mph. It's often the first choice of bikes when lots of baggage and, particularly, a passenger are part of the manifest. Even sportbike-addled *Sport Rider* scribe Andrew Trevitt reluctantly admits the GS is "pretty good."

The paint is shiny and all the panels, what few there are, piece together like a billet jigsaw puzzle. I and most of the regular staffers around here will miss the GS. As for my next long-termer, well...it'll be a cold day before I let it into the hands of anyone but the immediate *Motorcyclist* family. Lesson learned. —*M.C.*

KAWASAKI ZX-6R

Ringleader: **Cook** *Miles:* **1700–2500**

Lately, my trusty ZX-6R long-termer has spent as much time in the back of my truck as it has on the highway, in part thanks to a recent California Superbike School class. (Try the spooky, fixed-handlebar No Body Steer ZX on your next visit; it's a hoot.) The Kawasaki is a gem as a learning device because it's pretty stable and blessed with plenty of midrange punch, something you'll need to get on with Keith Code's two-gears-max training drills on the tight Streets of Willow circuit. The stock Dunlop D207ZRs are looking a bit ragged now, and I'll be casting about for replacements soon. —*M.C.*

YAMAHA YZF-R6

Ringleader: **Burns** *Miles:* **1500–2000**

My pert young Champion's Edition R6 has now run up 2000 miles in the couple of months it's been with us, all of them on the well-shagged D207 Star Dunlops Yamaha was kind enough to deliver the bike with at its Willow Springs coming-out party. Before the next track day gets here, I need rearsets, a steering damper, new tires—but the number of choices has me paralyzed. Zero problems thus far, and the R6 remains a surprisingly happy commuter. —*J.B.*

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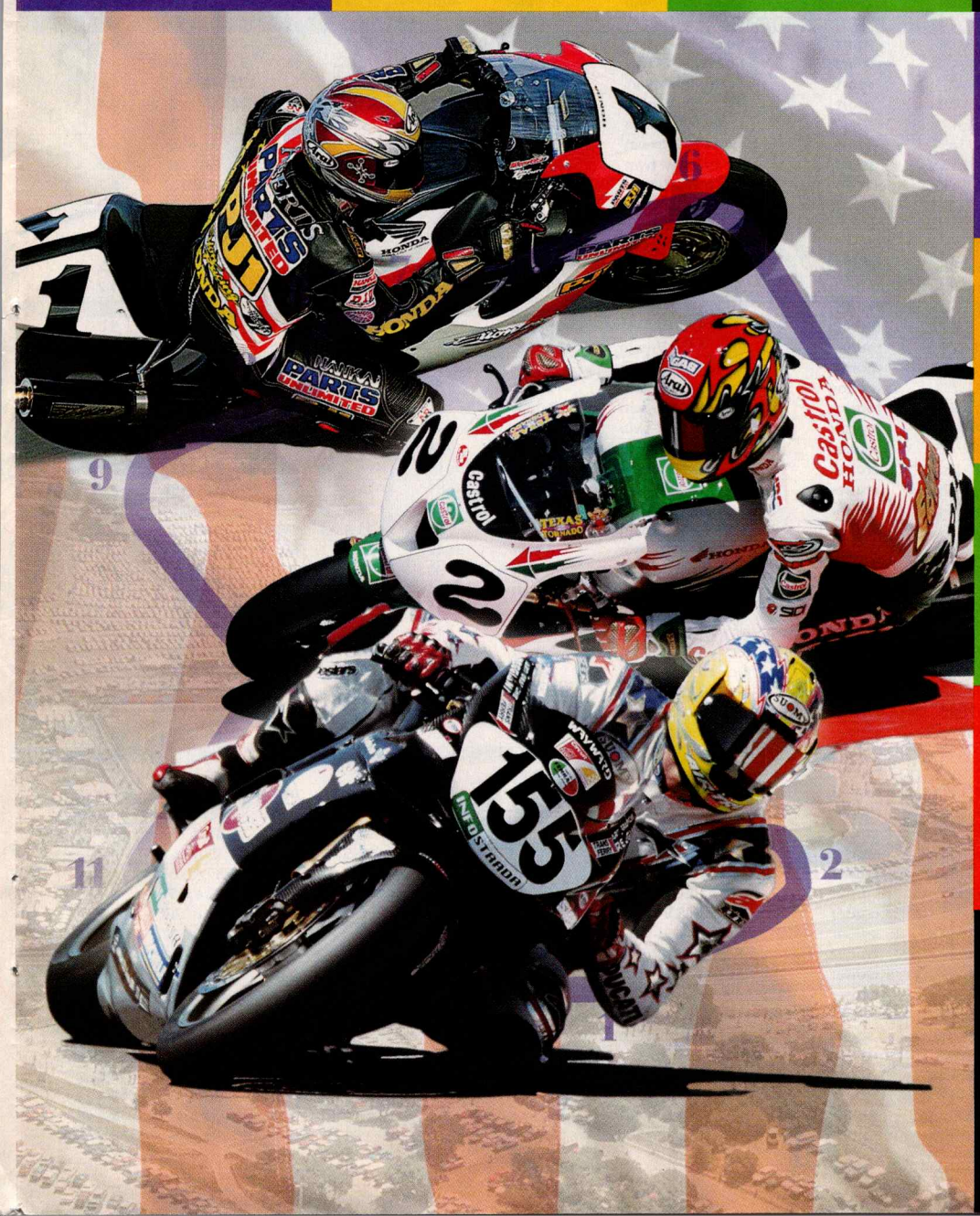

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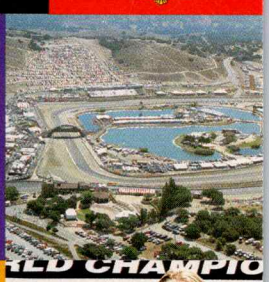

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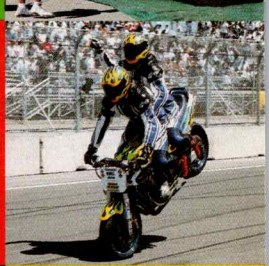

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RSV Mille	$13,899	sport	l-c 8v 998 V-twin	6/chain	416	32.5	55.2	24.5/95	5.0
SL1000 Falco	$11,299	sport	l-c 8v 998 V-twin	6/chain	418	32.1	55.2	24.5/100	5.3
RS250 Challenge	$8569	sport	l-c 2st 249 V-twin	6/chain	295	33.0	53.7	25.5/102	5.0
RS50	$3549	sport	l-c 2st 50 single	6/chain	196	31.9	50.4	24.0/102	3.4
RST1000 Futura	$12,999	sport-touring	l-c 8v 998V-twin	6/chain	463	32.3	56.5	26.9/102	5.5
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R1100RT	$15,990	sport-touring	a/o-c 8v 1085 opposed-twin	5/shaft	563	30.7	58.5	27.2/122	6.6
R1200C Euro	$15,100	cruiser	a/o-c 8v 1170 opposed-twin	5/shaft	482	29.1	64.9	29.5/134	4.5
R1200C	$14,500	cruiser	a/o-c 8v 1170 opposed-twin	5/shaft	482	29.1	64.9	29.5/134	4.5
R1150GS	$14,500	dual-sport	a/o-c 8v 1130 opposed-twin	6/shaft	530	33.1	59.4	27.1/114.3	5.5
F650GS	$8100	dual-sport	l-c 4v single	5/chain	395	30.7	58.5	28.1/113	4.4
R1100S	$13,990	sport	a/o-c 8v 1085 opposed-twin	6/shaft	487	29.9	58.2	25.0/100	4.8
R1150R	NA	standard	a/o-c 8v 1170 opposed-twin	6/shaft	492	31.5	58.5	27.0/127	5.4
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CAGIVA 2300 MARYLAND ROAD WILLOW GROVE, PA 19090; 215/830-3300 WWW.CAGIVAUSA.COM									
Gran Canyon	$8995	dual-sport	a-c 4v 904 V-twin	6/chain	458	33.2	59.8	27.5/91	5.3
DUCATI 237 WEST PARKWAY POMPTON PLAINS, NJ 07444; 973/839-2600 WWW.DUCATIUSA.COM									
996R	$28,000	sport	l-c 8v 998 V-twin	6/chain	407	31.1	55.5	23.5-24.5/91-97	4.4
996S	$21,895	sport	l-c 8v 996 V-twin	6/chain	436	31.1	55.5	23.5-24.5/91-97	4.4
996	$17,095	sport	l-c 8v 996 V-twin	6/chain	436	31.1	55.5	23.5-24.5/91-97	4.4
748/748S	$13,295	sport	l-c 8v 748 V-twin	6/chain	423	31.1	55.5	23.5-24.5/91-97	4.4
Supersport 900	$11,495	sport	a-c 4v 904 V-twin	6/chain	415	32.1	54.9	24.0/100	4.2
Supersport 750	$9545	sport	a-c 4v 748 V-twin	5/chain	404	32.1	55.3	24.0/96	4.2
750 Sport	$7895	sport	a-c 4v 748 V-twin	5/chain	400	32.1	55.3	24.0/96	4.2
ST4	$13,795	sport-touring	l-c 8v 916 V-twin	6/chain	474	32.3	56.3	24.0/102	5.5
ST2	$12,295	sport-touring	l-c 4v 944 V-twin	6/chain	460	32.3	56.3	24.0/102	5.5
Monster S4	$12,995	standard	l-c 8v 916 V-twin	6/chain	423	31.6	56.7	24.0/102	4.2
Monster 900	$10,395	standard	a-c 4v 904 V-twin	6/chain	407	30.3	56.3	23.0/104	4.2
Monster 750	$7795	standard	a-c 4v 748 V-twin	5/chain	392	30.3	56.3	23.0/94	4.2
Monster 600	$6195	standard	a-c 4v 583 V-twin	5/chain	392	30.3	56.3	23.0/94	4.2
HARLEY-DAVIDSON 3700 WEST JUNEAU AVENUE MILWAUKEE, WI 53208; 414/343-4680 WWW.HARLEY-DAVIDSON.COM									
Electra Glide Classic	$15,940	touring	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	776	27.3	63.5	26.0/156	5.0
Electra Glide Standard	$13,595	touring	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	758	27.3	63.5	26.0/156	5.0
Ultra Classic Electra Glide	$18,980	touring	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	788	27.3	63.5	26.0/156	5.0
Road Glide	$15,780	touring	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	731	26.9	63.5	26.0/156	5.0
Road King	$16,695	touring	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	723	27.3	63.5	26.0/156	5.0
Heritage Softail Classic	$16,235	cruiser	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	696	25.4	64.5	32.0/147	5.0
Heritage Springer	$17,545	cruiser	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	716	27.3	63.5	26.0/156	5.0
Softail Deuce	$16,235	cruiser	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	645	26.0	66.6	34.0/127	4.9
Springer Softail	$15,690	cruiser	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	653	25.8	65.4	32.0/135	5.0
Dyna Wide Glide	$15,695	cruiser	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	612	26.8	66.1	32.0/130	5.2
Fat Boy	$15,495	cruiser	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	666	25.5	64.5	32.0/147	5.0
Dyna Super Glide T-Sport	$14,720	cruiser	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	642	27.9	63.2	28.0/104	4.9
Night Train	$14,635	cruiser	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	630	25.2	66.9	34.0/127	5.0
Dyna Low Rider	$14,595	cruiser	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	614	26.5	65.5	32.0/130	4.9
Dyna Super Glide Sport	$13,720	cruiser	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	619	27.2	63.2	28.0/104	4.9
Softail Standard	$12,535	cruiser	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	630	26.1	66.9	34.0/127	5.0
Dyna Super Glide	$11,470	cruiser	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	612	26.5	62.5	28.0/104	4.9
Sportster 1200 Custom	$8995	cruiser	a-c 4v 1200 V-twin	5/belt	491	27.5	60.0	30.1/119	3.3
Sportster 1200 Sport	$8595	cruiser	a-c 4v 1200 V-twin	5/belt	501	28.0	60.2	29.6/117	3.3
Sportster 1200	$7895	cruiser	a-c 4v 1200 V-twin	5/belt	491	28.9	60.0	29.6/117	3.3
Sportster 883	$5595	cruiser	a-c 4v 883 V-twin	5/belt	489	28.0	60.0	30.1/119	3.3
HONDA 1919 TORRANCE BOULEVARD TORRANCE, CA 90501; 310/783-2000 WWW.HONDAMOTORCYCLE.COM									
Gold Wing	$17,499	touring	l-c 12v 1832 opposed-six	5/shaft	792	29.1	66.6	29.2/109	6.6
Valkyrie Interstate	$15,499	touring	l-c 12v 1520 opposed-six	5/shaft	771	28.7	66.5	32.0/152	6.9
Shadow A.C.E. Tourer	$9299	touring	l-c 6v 1099 V-twin	5/shaft	626	28.7	65.2	NA/NA	4.2
Valkyrie	$13,099	cruiser	l-c 12v 1520 opposed-six	5/shaft	682	28.9	66.5	32.2/152	5.3
Shadow Aero	$8999	cruiser	l-c 6v 1099 V-twin	5/shaft	615	28.5	66.1	32.4/161	4.2
Shadow Sabre	$8199	cruiser	l-c 6v 1099 V-twin	5/shaft	573	27.2	64.6	32.4/161	4.2
Shadow Spirit	$7999	cruiser	l-c 6v 1099 V-twin	5/shaft	544	28.7	65.0	32.4/161	4.2
Shadow Spirit 750	$5999	cruiser	l-c 6v 745 V-twin	5/chain	496	26.6	64.8	33.0/157	3.7
Magna	$7499	cruiser	l-c 16v 748 V-four	5/chain	505	28.0	65.0	32.0/137	3.6
Shadow A.C.E. 750 Deluxe	$6199	cruiser	l-c 6v 745 V-twin	5/chain	505	27.6	63.6	33.0/157	3.7
Shadow VLX	$4999	cruiser	l-c 6v 583 V-twin	4/chain	445	25.6	63.2	35.0/164	2.9
Rebel	$2999	cruiser	a-c 4v 234 vertical-twin	5/chain	306	26.6	57.1	30.0/113	2.6
ST1100/ST1100 ABS	$11,899	sport-touring	l-c 16v 1084 V-four	5/shaft	639/659	31.5	61.2	27.3/101	7.4
CBR1100XX	$10,999	sport	l-c 16v 1137 inline-four	6/chain	492	31.9	58.7	25.0/99	6.3
CBR929RR	$9999	sport	l-c 16v 929 inline-four	6/chain	375	32.1	54.9	23.8/97	4.8
RC51	$10,999	sport	l-c 8v 999 V-twin	6/chain	432	32.0	55.5	24.5/101	4.8
Interceptor	$9499	sport	l-c 16v 781 V-four	6/chain	463	31.7	56.7	25.3/95	5.5
Super Hawk	$8999	sport	l-c 8v 996 V-twin	6/chain	423	31.9	56.3	24.0/97	4.8
CBR600F4i	$8199	sport	l-c 16v 599 inline-four	6/chain	370	31.7	54.9	24.0/96	4.8

CONVENTIONS

note 1: cooling medium (a-c=air-cooled, l-c=liquid-cooled, a/o-c= air- and oil-cooled); total number of valves (4v), displacement in cc; number of cylinders and configuration (single, inline-three, opposed-twin, V-twin)

BACK ISSUES

To order back issues call (800) 544-6748, fax (201) 635-0145 or e-mail ISI@wwmag.com.

verdict
SP is the Superbike special, twice the price of the R
A Ducati 996 without the red mist
Saner version of the Mille makes us go "woo-hoo"
Ring-ding its little neck…it loves the attention
Rare, small, slow…only you know if you want one
Other STs cower in the Futura's angular presence
A new home for Mille's engine, looks good from here
More street than sport; distanced from BMW's F650
German Gold Wing; still very much a BMW
Autobahn burner continues unchanged; not nimble
Our pick for 2000's touring bike of the year
Special editions fill out C lineup
Trading style for function but a watershed for BMW
We can't tell you exactly why we love this bike so….
Sportier, in-house GS should be debugged by now
Polarizing styling; typically high BMW quality
Revised basic boxer should be a real treat
Fairing and bags aim it at BMW; wide of the mark
Big attitude, little bodywork; reliable now?
Our fave Buell; $200 Low option gets lower seat
Significant but unpolished…does polish matter here?
Duck-powered and quick reflexes…very nice
You can only dream; Ducati says it's sold out
Still brilliant and deadly serious, but aging rapidly
WSB-spec chassis mated to street-going 996 mill
Hanging with the supersport 600s and loving it
Charismatic air-cooled twin may be "classic" Duck
Small-bore 900SS sacrifices performance for price
New price leader gives up power and brakes
Lower price and standard hard bags improve value
Bucks down a bit for 2001, the ST2's a great deal
Hail the new wheelie king! 916 power makes us bulge
Cheaper and better…that's hooligan progress
Middle Monster may suffer Jan Brady syndrome
First time for the 600 here; watch out for SV650s
One notch down from the Ultra, a fine big rig
Blank canvas for hot-rod tourer, relatively cheap
Haul it all with substance and style; works good, too
Harley's sport-tourer with a killer stereo
Fun and functional, best parts of cruiser and tourer
H-D's bread and butter classic, just keeps selling
Huge pose factor now with competent engine
Our pick for cruiser of the year in 2000
Stripped-down springer; decent functionally
Hugely popular Dyna with kicked-out fork
Living large and selling well; you'll know if it's for you
Replaces Dyna Convertible; nicely equipped
If black is your thing, this is your chopper
Slammed suspension helps shorties, hurts ride
Sportiest Big Twin is among our favorite hogs
Bare bones Softail lets you customize with impunity
Entry-level Big Twin, still a pretty good piece
Custom big-inch Sporty leads the XL line
Sportiest Sportster will not harass many Buells
Basic 1200 still elemental; still a paint shaker
Cheapest Harley you can buy; basic and slightly crude
Completely new for 2001, resetting the standard
Previous-gen GL engine still hot to trot
Cruiser-based tourer; more competent than cool
Hard to argue with 100 foot-pounds of torque, eh?
Nice ride about to be obsoleted by 2002 VTX
Tough-guy custom growls but doesn't bite
Original VT1100 resurrected for the budget-minded
Budget cruiser with old engine and new styling licks
V-four power gives the Magna real performance
Midsize A.C.E. with fat tires and lots of chrome
Mini Shadow's lack of punch is fine for beginners
Nicely finished for the price, but very slow
Functional and evergreen; ABS/TCS is $2500 option
Not the most hyper big-bore but finely polished
Beat the R1 in our open-class shootout in 2000
A champion the first time out; a genuine achievement
Sport-touring with real sport, a big favorite here
Probably the last year for this all-around sport twin
Honda injects the F4; will it beat the R6 and GSX-R?

Obstacle Course

TOOL CRIB

MOTORCYCLES CAN BE A BEAR TO WORK ON. Sure, it's true you don't have to crawl across a fender or slither under the grimy underbelly as you do with a car, but today's performance bikes are packaged so tightly that some tasks are a knuckle-bashing pain in the rear.

Thankfully, there are specialized tools to ease your anguish. From the smaller-is-better camp come Craftsman's stubby combination wrenches ($29.99 for a seven-piece set, $59.99 for an 11-piece set and $5.49–$13.99 individually). These short-shank wrenches are often just the ticket for getting into tight spaces—the stubbies are at least an inch shorter than the standard items—and may offer a hidden advantage in that it will be harder to overtorque those delicate fasteners. They're perfect for the ham fist.

Sometimes, though, you just don't have the room (or, admit it, the patience) to swing a combo wrench, and that's where Craftsman's trick little ratcheting box-end jobbies earn their place in your toolbox. They're available in straight- and offset-head versions. The offset have a small reversing nub on the side that can get activated accidentally, but that's a small nit. You're most likely to need this kind of tool in the smaller sizes, so order up the models to cover 8mm, 10mm and 12mm. (Unfortunately, Sears packages these in weird sizes on the same wrench, like 7mm and 8mm, 9mm and 10mm, etc. When was the last time you used a 9mm wrench?)

In the same vein as the ratcheting box-ends are the short-handle ratcheting screwdrivers ($9.95–$12.95). Both straight- and offset-head models use 1/4-inch hex-drive bits. But here's the cool part: Craftsman's hex socket set is also 1/4-inch hex at the base, so you can pull the bit you need out of the socket and chuck it up in the angle driver. Presto! You've got an easier way of removing those pesky cam-cover bolts. Speaking of hex keys, by all means spring for the so-called ball-end versions. The extra play afforded by the notched end may make the difference between extracting a trapped bolt and sparking up the cutting torch.

Finally, to make setting those infuriatingly hidden idle-mixture (pilot) screws possible without the smell of singed flesh, you'll want Motion Pro's extremely cool geared angle-head driver ($123.90). With interchangeable bits at the end of a long drive shaft, the tool will let you make the pilot adjustment in even the tightest situations. You may not use this tool frequently but you'll be glad you have it.

MARC COOK

Motion Pro's angle-head driver

the list

model	price	class	engine (note 1)	speeds/ final drive	dry weight (lb.)	seat height (in.)	wheel-base (in.)	rake (deg)/ trail(mm)	fuel cap. (gal.)
Nighthawk 750	$5799	standard	a-c 16v 747 inline-four	5/chain	463	30.9	59.3	29.0/180	4.8
Nighthawk	$3399	standard	a-c 4v 234 vertical-twin	5/chain	287	29.3	56.3	28.0/109	4.3
XR650L	$5499	dual-sport	a-c 4v 644 single	5/chain	324	37.0	57.3	27.0/102	2.8
HUSQVARNA 2300 MARYLAND ROAD WILLOW GROVE, PA 19090; 215/830-3300 WWW.HUSQVARNAUSA.COM									
SM610S	$6499	super-motard	l-c 4v 576 single	6/chain	331	33.9	59.3	27.0/88	2.4
TE610E	$6399	dual-sport	l-c 4v 576 single	6/chain	330	35.4	58.5	27.5/116	2.4
KAWASAKI 9950 JERONIMO ROAD IRVINE, CA 92618; 949/770-0400 WWW.KAWASAKI.COM									
Vulcan 1500 Nomad Fi	$12,999	touring	l-c 8v 1470 V-twin	5/shaft	739	28.3	65.6	32.0/188	5.0
Vulcan 1500 Nomad	$12,299	touring	l-c 8v 1470 V-twin	5/shaft	732	28.3	65.6	32.0/188	4.2
Voyager XII	$12,299	touring	l-c 16v 1196 inline-four	5/shaft	728	29.7	63.8	30.0/122	6.1
Ninja ZX-12R	$11,999	sport	l-c 16v 1198 inline-four	6/chain	463	31.9	56.7	23.5/94	5.3
Ninja ZX-9R	$9999	sport	l-c 16v 899 inline-four	6/chain	404	31.9	55.7	24.0/97	5.0
Ninja ZX-11	$10,199	sport	l-c 16v 1052 inline-four	6/chain	514	30.7	58.9	26.5/107	6.3
Ninja ZX-7R	$9299	sport	l-c 16v 748 inline-four	6/chain	448	31.1	56.5	25.0/99	4.8
Ninja ZX-6R	$7899	sport	l-c 16v 599 inline-four	6/chain	377	32.3	55.1	23.5/91	4.8
Ninja ZX-6	$7199	sport	l-c 16v 599 inline-four	6/chain	430	30.7	56.3	24.5/97	4.8
Ninja 500R	$5099	sport	l-c 8v 498 vertical-twin	6/chain	388	30.5	56.5	27.0/91	4.8
Ninja 250R	$3299	sport	l-c 8v 248 vertical-twin	6/chain	304	29.3	55.1	27.0/84	4.8
Vulcan 1500 Drifter	$11,799	cruiser	l-c 8v 1470 V-twin	5/shaft	668	29.1	65.2	32.0/163	5.0
Vulcan 1500 Classic Fi	$10,799	cruiser	l-c 8v 1470 V-twin	5/shaft	659	29.1	65.4	32.0/122	5.0
Vulcan 1500 Classic	$9999	cruiser	l-c 8v 1470 V-twin	5/shaft	644	29.1	65.4	32.0/122	5.0
Vulcan 800 Drifter	$7499	cruiser	l-c 8v 805 V-twin	5/chain	547	29.9	63.6	31.5/157	4.0
Vulcan 800 Classic	$6999	cruiser	l-c 8v 805 V-twin	5/chain	516	27.8	63.0	32.0/122	4.0
Vulcan 800	$6299	cruiser	l-c 8v 805 V-twin	5/chain	496	28.0	64.0	34.0/150	4.0
Vulcan 750	$6099	cruiser	l-c 8v 749 V-twin	5/shaft	483	28.9	62.2	32.0/127	3.6
Vulcan 500 LTD	$4699	cruiser	l-c 8v 498 vertical-twin	5/chain	496	28.1	62.8	33.0/150	4.0
Eliminator 125	$2499	cruiser	l-c 4v 124 V-twin	5/chain	282	26.8	57.9	34.0/122	3.4
Concours	$8199	sport-touring	l-c 16v 997 inline-four	6/shaft	595	31.1	61.2	28.5/122	7.5
W650	$6599	standard	a-c 8v 676 vertical-twin	5/chain	434	31.5	57.1	27.0/104	4.0
ZRX1200R	$7899	standard	l-c 16v 1164 inline-four	5/chain	NA	31.1	57.6	25.0/104	5.3
ZR-7S	$5999	standard	a-c 8v 738 inline-four	5/chain	445	31.5	57.3	25.5/144	5.8
KLR650	$4999	dual-sport	l-c 4v 651 single	5/chain	337	35.0	58.9	28.0/112	6.1
KLR250	$4149	dual-sport	l-c 4v 249 single	6/chain	258	33.7	55.7	28.5/117	2.9
Super Sherpa	$3999	dual-sport	a-c 4v 249 single	6/chain	249	32.7	54.1	28.0/107	2.4
KE100	$1999	dual-sport	a-c 2st 99 single	5/chain	187	31.7	50.6	30.5/119	2.4
KTM 1119 MYLAN AVENUE AMHERST, OH 44001; 440/985-3553 WWW.KTMUSA.COM									
Duke II	$8198	sport	l-c 4v 625 single	5/chain	320	33.8	57.5	25.8/NA	3.0
LC4 Adventurer R	$8198	dual-sport	l-c 4v 625 single	5/chain	340	35.4	59.5	28.0/NA	7.4
640 LC4/400 LC4	$6998	dual-sport	l-c 4v 625/398 single	5/chain	340	37.6	59.5	27.5/NA	3.0
LAVERDA 110 LONDONDERRY COURT SUITE 130 WOODSTOCK, GA 30188; 770/592-2261 WWW.APRILIA.COM									
750 Formula	$10,595	sport	l-c 8v 747 vertical-twin	6/chain	412	NA	54.2	26.3/103	5.0
750 Supersport	$9495	sport	l-c 8v 747 vertical-twin	6/chain	412	NA	54.2	26.3/103	5.0
Strike Café Racer	$8995	sport	l-c 8v 747 vertical-twin	6/chain	412	NA	54.2	26.3/103	5.0
Strike	$8495	sport	l-c 8v 747 vertical-twin	6/chain	418	NA	54.2	26.3/103	5.0
MOTO GUZZI 455 WEST DEPOT STREET ANGIER, NC 27501; 919/639-3180 WWW.MOTOGUZZI-US.COM									
V11 Sport	$11,900	sport	a-c 4v 1064 V-twin	6/shaft	472	31.0	NA	NA/NA	5.5
California EV	$11,500	cruiser	a-c 4v 1064 V-twin	5/shaft	550	30.0	61.4	28.0/99	5.0
California Special	$10,950	cruiser	a-c 4v 1064 V-twin	5/shaft	545	28.8	NA	NA/NA	5.0
California Jackal	$8495	cruiser	a-c 4v 1064 V-twin	5/shaft	542	29.0	61.5	28.0/154	5.0
Quota	$9995	dual-sport	a-c 4v 1064 V-twin	5/shaft	541	32.8	61.0	NA/NA	5.2
MuZ 4 SIGNAL AVENUE, SUITE C ORMOND BEACH, FL 32174; 904/676-1056 WWW.MOTORRADNA.COM									
Black Panther	$6195	sport	l-c 5v 660 single	5/chain	345	34.5	59.5	NA/NA	3.0
Skorpion Traveller	$6495	sport-touring	l-c 5v 660 single	5/chain	415	31.0	56.0	NA/NA	4.7
Skorpion Sport Cup	$5795	sport	l-c 5v 660 single	5/chain	382	31.0	56.0	NA/NA	4.7
Skorpion Tour	$4995	standard	l-c 5v 660 single	5/chain	374	31.0	56.0	NA/NA	5.0
MV AGUSTA 2300 MARYLAND ROAD WILLOW GROVE, PA 19090; 215/830-3300 WWW.MVAGUSTAUSA.COM									
Brutale Serie Oro	$28,995	standard	l-c 16v 750 inline-four	6/chain	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
F4 Strada	$18,895	sport	l-c 16v 750 inline-four	6/chain	397	31.1	55.6	24.5/104	5.8
SUZUKI 3251 EAST IMPERIAL HIGHWAY BREA, CA 92821; 714/996-7040 WWW.SUZUKI.COM									
GSX1300R Hayabusa	$10,849	sport	l-c 16v 1299 inline-four	6/chain	473	31.7	58.5	24.0/97	5.8
GSX-R600	$7999	sport	l-c 16v 599 inline-four	6/chain	359	32.7	55.1	24.0/96	4.8
GSX-R750	$9449	sport	l-c 16v 749 inline-four	6/chain	366	32.6	55.5	24.0/94	4.8
GSX-R1000	$10,399	sport	l-c 988 inline-four	6/chain	375	32.3	55.5	24.0/96	4.8
TL1000R	$9599	sport	l-c 8v 996 V-twin	6/chain	434	32.5	54.9	23.0/90	4.5
TL1000S	$9099	sport	l-c 8v 996 V-twin	6/chain	421	32.9	55.7	23.0/95	4.5
SV650S	$6199	sport	l-c 8v 645 V-twin	6/chain	372	31.7	55.9	25.0/100	4.2
1500 Intruder LC	$9999	cruiser	a/o-c 6v 1462 V-twin	5/shaft	644	27.6	66.9	32.0/138	4.1
1400 Intruder	$8349	cruiser	a/o-c 6v 1360 V-twin	5/shaft	535	27.6	63.5	32.0/166	3.4
Intruder Volusia	$6599	cruiser	l-c 8v 805 V-twin	5/shaft	NA	27.6	64.7	33.0/141	4.2
800 Intruder	$6399	cruiser	l-c 8v 805 V-twin	5/shaft	443	28.9	61.4	32.0/138	3.2
Marauder	$5999	cruiser	l-c 8v 805 V-twin	5/chain	456	27.6	64.8	35.0/146	3.4
Savage	$4299	cruiser	a-c 4v 652 single	5/belt	352	27.6	58.3	35.0/147	2.8
GZ250	$2999	cruiser	a-c 2v 249 single	5/chain	308	27.8	57.1	32.0/140	3.7
1200S Bandit	$7399	sport-touring	a/o-c 16v 1157 inline-four	5/chain	471	32.9	56.5	25.0/107	5.0
750 Katana	$7299	sport-touring	a/o-c 16v 749 inline-four	6/chain	469	31.1	57.7	25.0/100	5.3
600 Katana	$6299	sport-touring	a-o-c 16v 599 inline-four	6/chain	458	30.9	57.9	25.0/100	5.3
600S Bandit	$5849	sport-touring	a-o/c 16v 599 inline-four	6/chain	449	31.1	56.4	25.0/100	5.3
SV650	$5799	standard	l-c 8v 645 V-twin	6/chain	363	31.7	56.3	25.0/100	4.2
GS500E	$4399	standard	a-c 4v 487 vertical-twin	6/chain	372	31.1	55.0	25.0/95	4.0
DR650SE	$5449	dual-sport	a/o-c 4v 644 single	5/chain	324	33.0	58.7	28.0/111	3.4
DR-Z400S	$5449	dual-sport	l-c 4v 398 single	5/chain	291	36.8	58.1	27.0/109	2.6

verdict
Still with us, still selling well, still fun
MSF drop doggie on a cat-food budget (still!)
Air-cooled thumper continues; waiting for XR-R mill
Husky's answer to KTM's awesome Duke II
A true enduro-racer with lights
Cruiser-based tourer with excellent injection
Fewer bucks and horses, not long in tooth
Old tourer hanging in there, about to earn retirement
Ferociously fast but not perfectly finished
Overshadowed by 929 and R1, great in the real world
With the 12R here, it's starting to show its age
Playing longer than *Cats*; what's new Kawasaki?
Smooth and comfy, right there with the F4 and R6
Feeling old next to the almost-as-comfortable 6R
Tot-sized twin with major-league fun factor
Our favorite 250; damning with faint praise?
For '01: larger fuel tank, solo seat and more chrome
Team Green's hot big-bore continues unchanged
Function and style merge for reasonable cash
Same updates as 1500, lacks only a few foot-pounds
Custom-styled V-twin remains a good seller
Save on the buy and spend on the aftermarket
Low price saves out-dated styling
Barstool-busting parallel-twin cleans up in the 500 class
All-new beginner bike; will 125cc be enough?
Popular and inexpensive ST getting varicose veins
Bonnie-buddy gets chassis tweaks for '01
Upping the ante at the naked table; watch out!
Half-faired version of KZ750-engined cheapster
Long-running model refined into super dual-sport
Smaller KLR may be your next ranch hand
Entry-level model excellent for dirty newbies
Hey...a two-stroke! Smoke 'em if you got 'em
If you can't get arrested on one of these...
Huge P/D replibike, park next to your Excursion
More dirty than streety, but that's fine by us
High-end parallel twin needs further development
Cheaper version with all the same foibles
Laverda's version of the Triumph Speed Triple
Naked and less expensive, but is that enough?
A stripped Guzzi in the V7 tradition; great 'box
Upmarket cruiser lavished in chrome; works fine
Guzzi cruiser stands ready for factory custom stuff
Simple, sporty cruiser that's also reasonably priced
Elderly adventurer-tourer; name your price
Who names these things, anyway?
Sport Cup with hard luggage, bigger fairing
Same Yamaha-built engine, less flash and less cash
Looks (and runs) like an SV650 with a lung removed
Monster? What's a Monster?
Exotic, desirable, competent; what else do you need?
Still the fastest open-class GT, and our favorite
All that's right with the new 750 in a middleweight
Motorcycle of the Year for 2000; stunning and fun
Stand back you wussie 929s and R1s!
Big and beefy sporty twin, days may be numbered
Likely to become a standardized SV1000 next year
Half-faired version finally comes here; a bit sedate
Big cruiser is actually a pretty good piece
U.S.-designed cruiser still with us, punchy engine
Marauder-based cruiser should be competent
Smaller, old-style Intruder continues to sell well
Bargain bruiser; a Magna without as much grunt
A decent little cruising single, if a bit basic
A bit wheezy next to the 250 twins but nicely built
Renewed for 2001 and better than ever; a great buy
Popular, reasonably cheap, old GSX-R750 power
Popular, even cheaper, early GSX-R600 power
Hard to distinguish from the 1200S
How long before *every* MC editor owns one?
Mild updates for 2001, but nothing major
Suzuki's street-ized big-bore dual-sport
An impressive d/p bike—a do-it-all machine

Answers

ANGULAR INCLUSION

You people have been going on for years about the ascendancy of the narrow included valve angle. For years I have sat here and nodded, as if I knew what you meant. Well, I don't. Do you?

George M. Camden
Knoxville, IA

George, we're proud of you. Admitting your shortcomings is the first step toward technological transcendence. Here's the deal: Back in the Bad Old Days, it took two big valves to move lots of combustibles through a four-stroke engine. That splayed valve stems apart at angles approaching 100 degrees atop slow-burning triangle-shaped combustion chambers and heavy, high-domed pistons. That deep rift between the cams of something such as Mike Hailwood's miraculous six-cylinder RC166 Honda admitted cooling air to help it survive, but there had to be a better way.

Although engines with more than one intake and exhaust valve per cylinder had been around for almost 40 years by the time (in 1966) Keith Duckworth and Mike Costin formed a British outfit called Cosworth, the lads figured four small valves per cylinder beat two big ones, and built the DFV to prove it. The 3.0-liter V-eight ruled Formula 1 auto racing for a dozen years, laying the foundation for modern four-stroke engine architecture. Largely empowered by the miracle of liquid cooling, our archetypal, oversquare, dohc, 16-valve four narrows the angle between its valve stems and the center of each piston down to approximately 20 degrees or so. More compact, more efficient, more horsepower. Aren't you glad you asked?

EXHAUSTING RATTLE

I have a 2000 CBR929RR and I have to say that it is as awesome as all of your articles have relayed. One problem I haven't seen addressed is the noisy (rattling) HTEV (a.k.a. Honda Titanium Exhaust Valve). I have a distinct vibrating, rattling noise coming from under the tank between 5000 and 5500 rpm.

I thought it was a loose bracket or something from the airbox. When I took the bike to my dealer to have the fuel-line recall work done, I told them to check the noise. Before they even looked at it they told me that it is the HTEV and the noise is traveling up the bike to make it sound like it's right under the tank. They claimed they talked to Honda reps about this and Honda confirmed that it is the valve, and there is nothing they can do about it. This is an awesome bike but at 5000 rpm (typical commuting revs) the noise tends to be annoying.

Bobby Akin
Tulsa, OK

Your dealer's explanation was correct as far as it went, which wasn't far enough. American Honda says the rattling radiates from heat-resistant carbon bushings used to make the exhaust gas control valve more durable. They resonate with engine vibration around 5000 rpm, hence the bothersome clatter. In other words, they all do that. We say earplugs are the easiest fix. Beyond that, you can buy a complete aftermarket exhaust system, which dispenses with the HTEV plumbing altogether. No more rattle, just more horsepower and less weight—but more noise.

ENCLOSED CHAINS EXPOSED

In your April 2001 review of the Yamaha XP500 Tmax scooter, you noted it has an enclosed chain running in an oil bath. Two decades ago, Yamaha had the XV920 model with a similar system. I have always felt that an enclosed chain is the ideal solution to the hard choice between the simplicity of the chain and the low maintenance of the shaft. Why don't more bikes have enclosed chains?

Chase Kimball
Midvale, UT

Twenty or 30 years ago, before contemporary metallurgy and tiny rubber O-rings, it made sense to isolate motorcycle chains in a clean, well-lubricated place. It still makes sense on a posh scooter sentenced to survive with little or no maintenance. Otherwise, the oil-bath arrangement adds more weight and expense to motorcycles where those factors loom large. When pounds and dollars are less critical—a big tourer for example—most manufacturers opt for shaft drive, at least partially because buyers of such bikes prefer it.

Send your questions to *Motorcyclist*, Attn: Answers, 6420 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90048-5515; fax them to (323) 782-2372; or e-mail us at mcmail@emapusa.com. Time doesn't permit personal replies and the editors reserve the right to edit all letters, which must be exclusive to *Motorcyclist*.

the list

model	price	class	engine (note 1)	speeds/ final drive	dry weight (lb.)	seat height (in.)	wheel-base (in.)	rake (deg)/ trail(mm)	fuel cap. (gal.)
DR200SE	$3899	dual-sport	a-c 4v 199 single	5/chain	249	31.9	55.3	29.0/112	3.4
TRIUMPH 403 DIVIDEND DRIVE PEACHTREE CITY, GA 30269; 770/631-9500 WWW.TRIUMPH.CO.UK									
Trophy 1200	$11,999	sport-touring	l-c 16v 1180 inline-four	6/chain	518	31.1	58.7	27.0/105	6.6
Trophy 900	$10,999	sport-touring	l-c 12v 885 inline-three	6/chain	455	31.1	58.7	27.0/105	6.6
Sprint ST	$10,799	sport-touring	l-c 12v 955 inline-three	6/chain	456	31.5	57.9	25.0/92	5.6
Daytona	$10,999	sport	l-c 12v 955 inline-three	6/chain	436	31.5	56.3	24.0/86	4.8
Speed Triple	$10,499	sport	l-c 12v 955 inline-three	6/chain	432	31.5	56.7	24.0/86	4.8
Sprint RS	$9499	sport	l-c 12v 955 inline-three	6/chain	438	31.7	57.9	24.5/89	5.6
TT600	$8299	sport	l-c 16v 599 inline-four	6/chain	374	31.9	54.9	24.0/89	4.8
Tiger	$10,799	dual-sport	l-c 12v 955 inline-three	6/chain	474	33.1	61.0	28.0/92	6.4
Adventurer	$8999	cruiser	l-c 12v 885 inline-three	5/chain	464	28.5	63.8	30.0/130	4.0
Thunderbird	$8999	cruiser	l-c 12v 885 inline-three	6/chain	485	30.5	62.2	27.0/106	4.0
Legend TT	$7799	cruiser	l-c 12v 885 inline-three	5/chain	473	28.5	62.2	27.0/106	4.0
Bonneville	$6999	standard	l-c 4v 790 vertical-twin	5/chain	451	31.5	57.0	29.0/117	4.3
VICTORY 2100 HIGHWAY 55 MEDINA, MN 55340; 612/542-0500 WWW.POLARISINDUSTRIES.COM									
V92C Deluxe	$14,599	cruiser	a/o-c 8v 1507 V-twin	5/belt	657	28.5	63.6	30.0/120	5.0
V92SC	$13,399	cruiser	a/o-c 8v 1507 V-twin	5/belt	657	28.5	63.6	30.0/120	5.0
V92C	$13,399	cruiser	a/o-c 8v 1507 V-twin	5/belt	657	28.5	63.6	30.0/120	5.0
YAMAHA 6555 KATELLA AVENUE CYPRESS, CA 90630; 714/761-7300 WWW.YAMAHA-MOTOR.COM									
Royal Star Venture	$16,399	touring	l-c 16v 1294 V-four	5/shaft	807	29.5	67.1	30.0/126	6.0
RS Tour Deluxe	$15,499	touring	l-c 16v 1294 V-four	5/shaft	728	28.5	66.7	30.0/126	4.8
Royal Star Boulevard	$14,299	cruiser	l-c 16v 1294 V-four	5/shaft	672	28.1	66.7	30.0/126	4.8
Road Star Silverado	$12,399	cruiser	a-c 8v 1602 V-twin	5/belt	710	27.9	66.3	32.0/142	5.3
Road Star Midnight Star	$11,799	cruiser	a-c 8v 1602 V-twin	5/belt	677	27.9	66.3	32.0/142	5.3
Road Star	$10,999	cruiser	a-c 8v 1602 V-twin	5/belt	677	27.9	66.3	32.0/142	5.3
V-Max	$10,899	cruiser	l-c 16v 1198 V-four	5/shaft	581	30.1	62.6	29.0/119	4.0
V-Star 1100 Classic	$8199	cruiser	a-c 4v 1063 V-twin	5/shaft	599	27.9	64.8	33.0/136	4.5
V-Star 1100 Custom	$7899	cruiser	a-c 4v 1063 V-twin	5/shaft	571	27.0	64.5	33.0/136	4.5
V-Star Classic	$5899	cruiser	a-c 4v 649 V-twin	5/shaft	495	28.0	64.0	35.0/NA	4.2
V-Star Custom	$5599	cruiser	a-c 4v 649 V-twin	5/shaft	460	25.6	64.0	35.0/NA	4.2
Virago 250	$3399	cruiser	a-c 4v 249 V-twin	5/chain	302	27.0	58.6	32.0/120	2.5
YZF-R1	$10,299	sport	l-c 20v 998 inline-four	6/chain	385	32.0	54.9	24.0/92	4.7
YZF-R6	$7999	sport	l-c 16v 599 inline-four	6/chain	365	32.8	54.4	24.0/81	4.5
YZF600R	$6999	sport	l-c 16v 599 inline-four	6/chain	416	31.7	55.7	25.0/97	5.0
FZ1	$8499	standard	l-c 20v 998 inline-four	6/chain	458	32.3	57.1	NA/NA	5.6
XT225	$3999	dual-sport	a-c 4v 223 single	6/chain	238	31.9	53.1	26.5/102	2.3
TW200	$3599	dual-sport	a-c 2v 198 single	5/chain	262	31.1	52.2	26.5/94	1.9

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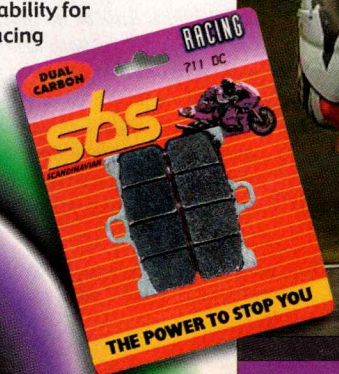

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verdict
Basic and fun wheels for entry-level folks
Touring model with a replacement expected soon
Trophy chassis package, three-cylinder propulsion
Finally a BRG version; keeps the VFR800 honest
Due for a redesign soon, but still haughty
You'll know you love it from a half-mile away
Sportier than the ST, just as beautifully torquey
New cams and tune for '01 may save this bike
Now with stonking Sprint ST power—yee haw!
A custom T-bird with V-twin-squashing power
Retro-cruiser looks, naked-bike performance
Entry-level Britbike, torquey and talented triple
Hugely anticipated and amazingly inexpensive
Revision for '01 to bring function up to par
Plenty of sporty function, tranny *still* needs help
Fewer rough edges, but not up to Japanese standards
Retro looks, long-haul function, needs new 'shield
A decent touring cruiser in need of some punch
Standard Star also wants a horsepower injection
Touring version of the highly competent Road Star
Blacked-out version should broaden model's appeal
Functional and handsome, what else do you need?
A legend retires; this is (supposedly) its last year
Middle-range big cruiser plows ahead
Less retro, same great low price
"Heritage" styling but mostly modern underneath
More custom than nostalgic; same chassis/engine
A cheap V-twin that'll get you in the game
Unchanged for '01; champs edition has new paint
Faces tough competition from new GSX-R and F4i
Understandably overlooked, but a real gem
Oooh, oooh…we *want* one
Lightweight and fun entry-level dual-sport
A fat-tired fun-bike for the family

No Wake Zone

STREET SAVVY

IT'S TEMPTING TO follow along behind overexuberant or crazed motorcycle riders for the sheer entertainment value, but resist the urge. We see them now and then, whipping past with knees down on the road or splitting lanes through heavy traffic at 90 mph with a race can. The urge to follow along to witness the inevitable crash (or help speed it along) is usually strong.

Don't do it. When the road-going equivalent of Carlos Checa eventually loses it into oncoming traffic, the Buick grill with his name on it will swerve to avoid him and, possibly, overcorrect back into whoever has the misfortune to be following. And when Lane-split Boy makes contact with the fender of a Ford Expedition practicing Formula-1-style lane changes while its driver closes a real estate deal, the ensuing evasive maneuvers will make a NASCAR pile-up look tame by comparison. Steer clear of idiots on two wheels, as well as on four.

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Swerve! TECHNIQUE

KEVIN WING

IN THE FEBRUARY 2001 TECHNIQUE, WE considered the three options to sudden blockage of vehicular progress: What should you do—accelerate, brake or swerve? Doesn't matter what the obstruction is, either—a renegade outboard motor, a Domino's pizza (still in the box) or one very confused man in a kilt. (Name something we *haven't* seen on the street.)

Let's look closer at the swerve. When—not *if*—you approach the impediment *du jour* and you've made that split-second decision to stay off the brakes, the next question should be: around or over? You could go either way on the pizza, but the Evinrude and Kilt Man call for the basic swerve; essentially two precise turns executed in rapid succession.

The fundamentals are simple. For sake of discussion, let's say we're going around the outboard motor on the left. Because you go where your eyes lead whether you want to or not, look at the solution instead of the problem. Trace an escape route around the left of the blockade. Now it's time again to demonstrate the Miracle of Countersteering. Push the handlebar forward with your left hand, shift your weight to the left, and, praise be, turn left. After steering clear of the unanticipated inconvenience without hitting anything else, push to the right, lean to the right and, subsequently, turn to the right, regaining the original route.

The tires are already busy (so go easy on the brakes and throttle while all this is going on) and may lose their grip if you order more than they have. Given the speed and precision often necessary for successful swerves, there's no time to think and recall. You have to react. So practice. That guy in the kilt is still out there.

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hard numbers

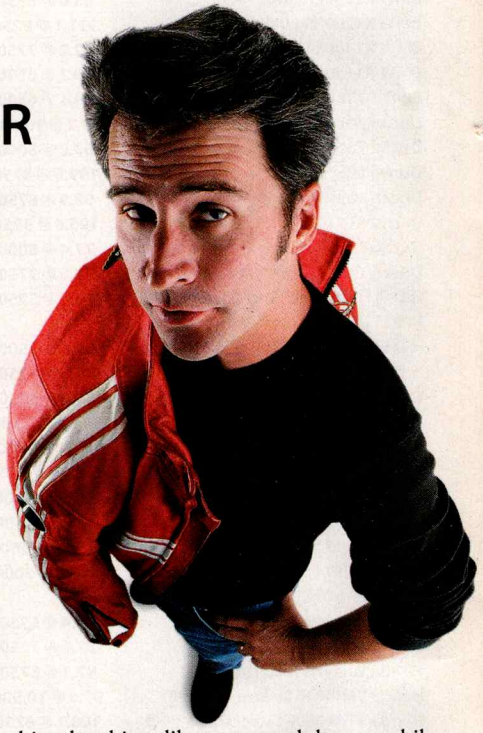
motorcycle	measured hp (@ rpm)	measured torque (foot-pounds @ rpm)	corrected best 1/4 mi.* (sec. @ mph)	top-gear roll-ons 60–80 mph (sec.)	wet weight (lb.)	fuel consumption (avg. mpg)	last** tested
Aprilia RSV Mille ('00)	113.6 @ 9500	71.6 @ 7000	10.58 @ 131.5	3.80	490	39	4/00
Aprilia SL1000 ('00)	110.4 @ 9500	69.3 @ 7100	10.99 @ 125.0	4.56	485	39	8/00
BMW F650GS ('00)	43.5 @ 6250	40.3 @ 4500	13.76 @ 91.6	6.03	442	45	7/00
BMW K1200LT ('00)	83.0 @ 6750	75.7@ 5000	13.83 @ 98.7	9.42	866	41	2/01
BMW K1200RS ('98)	111.1 @ 8250	79.1 @ 6750	11.77 @ 118.2		643	36	8/97
BMW R1100S ('00)	92.2 @ 7250	70.9 @ 5750	12.67 @ 111.0	5.44	545	31	6/00
BMW R1150GS ('00)	79.7 @ 6500	72.2 @ 5500	12.84 @ 103.1	6.59	586	42	12/99
Buell S3 Thunderbolt ('99)	90.1 @ 6500	78.1 @ 6000	11.90 @ 113.2		514	47	10/98
Ducati 748 ('97)	89.7 @ 10,500	51.7 @ 8500	11.59 @ 119.7		472	43	5/97
Ducati 750 Sport ('01)	60.8 @ 8000	43.9 @ 6000	12.75 @ 103.3	5.57	431	43	6/01
Ducati 996 ('99)	109.8 @ 8750	69.6 @ 6750	10.61 @ 130.2	5.35	478	40	3/99
Ducati Monster S4 ('01)	98.9 @ 8750	63.5 @ 7000	11.20 @ 121.04	4.11	459	43	5/01
Ducati ST4 ('99)	105.5 @ 9250	63.3 @ 7250	11.03 @ 123.8	4.88	525	44	2/99
Ducati Supersport 900 ('99)	77.4 @ 8000	57.3 @ 5750	11.65 @ 114.9	5.26	444	44	11/98
Ducati Supersport 900 i.e.('00)	77.5 @ 7750	59.3 @ 5750	11.99 @ 109.5	5.61	444	43	6/00
H-D FLHCRI Road King Classic ('99)	62.4 @ 5250	77.2 @ 3000	13.99 @ 94.5	5.32	744	43	12/98
H-D FLTR/FLTRI Road Glide ('98)			14.39 @ 90.7	9.02	762	46	6/98
H-D FXDX Dyna Super Glide Sport ('99)	62.5 @ 5500	76.3 @ 3250	13.54 @ 96.5	5.82	651	39	11/98
H-D S.E. Road Glide ('00)	70.8 @ 5250	86.4 @ 2750	13.93 @ 93.1	6.71	828	33	5/00
H-D Sportster XL1200S Sport ('98)	57.0 @ 5250	66.3 @ 3250	13.65 @ 96.1	4.99	524	41	1/98
Honda CBR600F4 ('00)	94.8 @ 12,500	44.8 @ 10,000	11.61 @ 115.9	6.76	436	41	8/00
Honda CBR900RR ('98)	111.4 @ 10,000	63.7 @ 8000	10.65 @ 130.2	3.70	448	42	*6/98*
Honda CBR929RR ('01)	128.4 @ 10,750	68.4 @ 8750	10.28 @ 135.9	2.98	442	38	4/01
Honda CBR1100XX ('97)	136.7 @ 9500	80.9 @ 7500	10.20 @ 134.5		556	39	2/97
Honda Gold Wing ('01)	104.1 @ 5500	109.9 @ 4250	12.78 @ 103.3	5.90	898	36	2/01
Honda GL1500C Valkyrie ('97)	95.9 @ 5500	96.1 @ 4000	12.13 @ 107.0		739	32	1/97
Honda RC51 ('00)	118.5 @ 9000	72.1 @ 7500	10.97 @ 128.2	4.94	489	38	8/00
Honda Shadow A.C.E. Tourer ('98)			13.91 @ 92.2		663	37	7/97
Honda Shadow Spirit 750 ('01)	41.4 @ 5750	43.2 @ 3500	14.89 @ 86.7	9.15	523	49	4/01
Honda ST1100 ABSII-TCS ('96)	87.0 @ 7250	72.2 @ 5250	12.40 @ 106.0		726	42	8/96
Honda Valkyrie Interstate ('99)	97.1 @ 5750	97.3 @ 4500	12.76 @ 100.8	6.38	859	31	8/99
Honda VFR800F Interceptor ('98)	97.0 @ 10,500	54.9 @ 8500	11.14 @ 122.2	5.23	515	38	8/99
Honda VTR1000F Super Hawk ('00)	100.7 @ 8250	67.0 @ 6250	11.47 @ 119.4	5.00	480	31	6/00
Honda VTX ('02)	88.9 @ 5250	100.3 @ 3000	12.20 @ 105.5	4.30	758	47	6/01
Kawasaki Vulcan 1500 Classic FI ('00)	54.6 @ 5000	73.6 @ 2500	14.07 @ 92.6	9.43	727	41	9/00
Kawasaki Vulcan 1500 Nomad ('99)	51.0 @ 4500	72.3 @ 2500	15.33 @ 85.8	8.27	775	34	12/98
Kawasaki W650 ('00)	44.8 @ 6750	38.4 @ 5250	14.19 @ 90.4	9.36	473	44	8/00
Kawasaki ZX-6R Ninja ('00)	96.2 @ 12,500	44.7 @ 10,250	11.38 @ 120.5	5.26	434	43	8/00
Kawasaki ZX-7R Ninja ('96)	114.5 @ 11,250	57.1 @ 9000	10.82 @ 129.7		519	39	4/96
Kawasaki ZX-9R Ninja ('01)	128.1@ 11,250	69.9 @ 9000	10.34 @ 135.9	3.18	467	38	4/01
Kawasaki ZX-12R Ninja('00)	162.7 @ 10,000	93.7 @ 7500	9.96 @ 142.3	3.23	547	37	6/00
Moto Guzzi Sport 1100i ('97)	73.3 @ 7000	61.5 @ 5750	12.79 @ 105.5	5.20	538	39	8/97
Moto Guzzi V11 Jackal ('00)	63.2 @ 6500	59.9 @ 5250	13.74 @ 98.0	7.60	564	42	2/00
Moto Guzzi V11 Sport ('00)	80.6 @ 7750	65.0 @ 5750	12.18 @ 110.9	5.14	546	40	10/00
MV Agusta F4 Strada ('00)	114.6 @ 12,750	52.6 @ 10,250	11.09 @ 128.0	4.86	480	33	9/00
Suzuki Bandit 600S ('00)	72.9 @ 10,750	38.6 @ 9000	12.59 @ 106.8	6.76	510	40	5/00
Suzuki Bandit 1200S ('01)	101.6 @ 8250	71.8 @ 7250	11.15 @ 121.8	4.02	543	40	10/00
Suzuki GSX1300R Hayabusa ('99)	156.1 @ 9500	99.0 @ 6750	10.34 @ 140.8	2.70	550	36	6/99
Suzuki GSX-R600 ('01)	100.5 @ 13,000	45.6 @ 10,750	10.80 @ 125.4	5.33	423	39	2/01
Suzuki GSX-R750 ('00)	123.0 @ 12,500	57.7 @ 10,000	10.26 @ 135.6	4.11	426	36	7/00
Suzuki GSX-R1000 ('01)	143.6 @ 10,500	76.7 @ 8250	10.10 @ 141.7	2.73	437	39	4/01
Suzuki SV650S ('01)	65.8 @ 9250	42.6 @ 7500	12.60 @ 109.4	5.13	428	42	1/01
Suzuki TL1000S ('00)	106.1 @ 8250	69.1 @ 6500	11.15 @ 121.1	4.61	487	42	6/00
Suzuki TL1000R ('98)	121.1 @ 9000	74.9 @ 7250	10.76 @ 129.1	4.30	505	40	*10/98*
Triumph Legend TT ('00)	67.4 @ 7750	51.9 @ 4000	13.32 @ 96.7	5.87	522	33	8/00
Triumph Sprint RS ('00)	93.6 @ 9250	61.5 @ 5250	11.76 @ 110.4	4.77	512	34	6/00
Triumph Sprint ST ('99)	102.8 @ 9250	65.2 @ 5250	11.53 @ 116.3	3.83	530	45	8/99
Triumph T509 Speed Triple ('97)	83.4 @ 9000	53.5 @ 7500	11.71 @ 114.1	4.59	477	37	*8/97*
Triumph Tiger ('99)	72.0 @ 8250	48.1 @ 5750	13.15 @ 101.1	6.51	550	42	12/99
Triumph TT600 ('01)	91.1 @ 12,750	39.2 @ 11,250	11.23 @ 121.33	4.59	456	38	5/01
Yamaha Road Star ('99)	56.8 @ 4000	88.5 @ 2250	14.44 @ 88.9		740	43	7/99
Yamaha Royal Star Tour Deluxe ('97)			14.57 @ 90.0		793	37	7/97
Yamaha Royal Star Venture ('99)	81.7 @ 6000	79.7 @ 4500	13.66 @ 93.6	8.74	890	32	8/99
Yamaha V-Max ('97)	118.2 @ 8500	84.6 @ 6000	10.87 @ 124.0		616	33	1/97
Yamaha YZF600R ('97)	88.5 @ 11,000	45.9 @ 9750	11.31 @ 118.9	4.96	485	44	5/97
Yamaha YZF-R1 ('01)	129.8 @ 10,500	70.7 @ 8750	10.42 @ 134.7	2.82	446	39	4/01
Yamaha YZF-R6 ('00)	96.4 @ 12,500	42.4 @ 10,750	11.23 @ 123.2	5.29	425	38	8/00
Victory V92C ('98)	56.0 @ 4850	74.9 @ 3300	14.28 @ 90.0		692	38	7/99

* Performance with test-session weather conditions corrected to sea-level standard conditions (59 degrees F, 29.92 in. of mercury).
**Months listed in italics are issues the motorcycle was tested in *Sport Rider*.
Test numbers used here generated by the *Motorcyclist* staff using a Dynojet 150 rear-wheel dynamometer, Intercomp SWII digital scale and Los Angeles County Raceway's quarter-mile strip utilizing a Chrondek timing system.

bitter little man

by John Burns
Senior Editor

The Ceremonial Flinging of the GSX-R



ALONG WITH THE LAYING OF THE YULE LOG, THE wearin' o' the green, the throwing out of the first pitch, the cooking of the Thanksgiving bird, the coming through the rye, the tossing of the caber, etc., I've observed one other ritual over the years with enough frequency that I feel it deserves to enter the celebratory pantheon: the traditional tossing down the road of the Suzuki GSX-R.

It's difficult to say what makes the GSX-R the bike of choice, because no design flaw we've ever been able to uncover makes it any easier to fall off of than any other sportbike (with the possible exception of the 1996 GSX-R750, which high-sided myself spectacularly). Is it because, being the first modern race replica, it's logged more miles? Dunno. As a newcomer to the bike-magazine business back at *Cycle*, one of my earliest (and fondest) memories is of Dan E. Coe—a veritable god to me in those days and still—cartwheeling a brand-new GSX-R750 off the top of Turn Six at Willow Springs during the bike's press debut there in, what? '87? Wow! You guys really do torture-test them!

I would go on to extrude a 750 Katana (GSX-F, but close enough) through a three-rail gate, fall off a GSX-R1100 in Decker Canyon, dismount from a 750 on the 405 freeway just south of LAX Airport, and then destroy the aforementioned 750 at Willow Springs during our 24-Hour flog that year. That's just me. Mark Reese, Suzuki's fleet manager, and Craig and Chuck in the Suzuki shop used to lay odds on how long a Suzuki would last if I had access to it, which was a form of insider trading Gordon Gecko could only envy. I also fell off an FZR1000, a 550 Zephyr, a CBR900RR and probably some other stuff—oh yeah, a ZX-6R at a rainy press launch which doesn't really count, and don't even bring up the SRX—but GSX-Rs are inexplicably way overrepresented.

What brought this all to mind was a recent spate—nay, a veritable *run on the bank*—of GSX-R crashes *not* involving me.

At the GSX-R1000 press launch at Road Atlanta, *Cycle World*'s Don Canet annihilated a bike, which tumbled and came to rest, wheels up and spinning, outside Turn Two. Canet never falls off anything, and goes fast enough at press launches to make the rest of us look like the pikers that we are. If not for Canet, we might've been able to delude ourselves that we're pretty damn quick, and because confidence is all, it's really his fault I never broke into the big time. Serves his thin ass right, then.

Let's not forget former *Sport Rider* associate editor (and current *Motorcycle Street & Strip* editor) Peter Jones, who also binned a 1000 in Atlanta. I love it when Petey trashes one because I know his rationale will rival the time I saw Rodney Dangerfield in Las Vegas: When Jones crashed his ZX-6R on Catalunya's front straight at the same wet launch as me, it was because he knew he was locking the front brake, but couldn't possibly make Turn One anyway and so *chose* to not let off it. At Atlanta, he politely ran wide in a corner to let our man Boehm through [*Too polite actually, because I was ahead of him at the time—Ed.*], but didn't realize exactly how wide he'd run until that wonderful *skriiiiiish* of plastic on pavement. (I've always wondered why racebikes don't have mirrors.) Truly, this is fun with motorcycles.

Back on the West Coast and "testing" our GSX-R1000, it would be unfair of me not to mention that Curtis Adams low-sided our bike during a photo shoot. Adams falls off now and again because he goes so damnably fast, even when you repeatedly mention there's no actual race occurring, and I love him but only in the most manly of ways. And young McQuide, wherever he is, would laugh loudest if I brought up his actually pretty humorous crash of a GSX-R750 in Sand Canyon a year or two ago. I know it was humorous because I was right behind him laughing like a spotted hyena while McQuide laid down a long black stripe with his rear tire. Life is unfair, death is considerably more so, and you still owe me 20 bucks.

Meanwhile, Matt Miles at *Cycle World* was busy destroying a GSX-R600 at Willow Springs. Miles is the sort of fine human you hope your wife will grow up and date. Rumor has it the loyal opposition at *Cycle World* tanked another GSX-R1000 during testing, but mum's the word.

Our friends at *Sport Rider* magazine were not idle while all this was going on: They trashed a GSX-R600 at Willow, too, and back in the Nick Era, Ienatsch could've split a deer in two with any bike but chose a GSX-R—must've been about '97. Research would uncover many more, I'm sure.

Wait! One more over the transom as we go to press! Paul Carruthers (son of Kel), Editor of *Cycle News*, and enemy mine, put yet another GSX-R1000 out of its misery off Turn Three at Willow Springs. According to Carruthers, he'd been resetting the lap record on a bike with race tires, then hopped on a different one, accidentally, on cold street rubber! It could happen to anybody, but I would hazard the guess that it happens more frequently to guys who don't know which motorcycle is theirs. Knock wood. MC

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